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# **HASBARA HANDBOOK:** *Promoting Israel on Campus*



# **Hasbara Handbook: Promoting Israel on Campus**

**Published and produced by WUJS, the World Union of Jewish Students.**

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## HASBARA HANDBOOK

Writing this handbook has been a difficult task. Trying to strike a balance between support for Israel, and a realisation that some things just aren't black and white has been our goal. We hope that what has resulted is useful to Jewish students everywhere, and that ultimately Israel is strengthened through our efforts.

Jewish students in the Diaspora are not unconditional supporters of Israel, just as Israelis have different political preferences. Unfortunately, many Jewish students express their dissatisfaction with some government action or other by ignoring Israel, giving up on her just when she needs the most help and support. In our *Hasbara Handbook* we have rejected the old-fashioned position which states that every Jewish student must support everything that Israel does. Rather, we believe, Israel is an imperfect country, invariably run by imperfect governments. Mistakes are made, approaches are taken that are hard to understand, but one thing remains constant – the Jewish state has a right to exist, and her citizens have a right to safety.

That the Palestinian leadership has made some serious strategic mistakes is not in doubt. No doubt, they will do again. But Israel is not perfect, and only a fool would pretend that she is. When confronted with atrocities such as terror attacks on teenagers, we can campaign hard on campus for the sake of Jews in Israel without *believing* that Israel is perfect. Israel shouldn't have to present herself as without problems – just as no other country does. All around the world governments are attempting to tackle racism, poverty, prejudice – and Israel is no different. But if a young soldier at a road-block panics when attacked by rocks and petrol bombs, if somebody is injured as a result of human error, Jewish students often despair and lose their faith in Israel just when she most needs support.

The reluctance of Jewish students to get behind Israel unconditionally is probably connected to the gradual shift in our generation towards attempting to find personal meaning in Judaism. Very few young Jews will do things merely because a Jewish organisation or authority mandates them. We are individuals looking to enrich our lives through Jewish engagement. We are proudly ethical, and proudly independent. This *Hasbara Handbook* attempts to acknowledge all of this, whilst providing Jewish students with the tools to defend Israel as a country in an intelligent and thinking way. Different responses to issues are legitimate and some Jewish students will be reluctant to defend some Israeli government action: the most important thing, we believe, is that Jewish students do what they can to explain the huge complexity of the problems and dangers facing Israel, to lobby for support for Israel, and pressure for an end to Palestinian violence.



Practically speaking, this *Hasbara Handbook* has attempted to show that different positions exist on debates, and that the pro-Israel banner is very wide indeed. In general we have presented a fairly centrist line, in an attempt not to offend anybody, but we have included other opinions too, and attempted to remain aware of the subtleties of the debates. We have also explicitly tackled some of the dilemmas facing Jewish activists, and talked about when it's legitimate to criticise Israel, what to do on policies one doesn't agree with, when it's okay to talk honestly, and so on. We hope that the product is something that Jewish students feel comfortable with.

This document is evolving all the time on the WUJS website at [www.wujs.org.il](http://www.wujs.org.il) – we will incorporate suggestions, add articles that students suggest are necessary, and keep up to date with the latest news developments. Please join the growing community of Jewish activists who are keen to share their ideas and expertise. Together we can help Israel and help each other.

Jewish students need the tools to defend themselves against anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist attacks, to help Israel in her fight against violence and drive for peace, and to enrich their connection to the people of Israel. These are times of despair and hopelessness. Please dig deep to find the strength to be pro-active, to help Israel, and spread a message of peace and non-violence.

WUJS Staff

## FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

At the World Conference Against Racism, held in Durban in late August 2001, I saw and heard a level of anti-Jewish hatred I had never come across before. With other young Jews, from countries around the world, I was on the receiving end of a worrying new phenomenon.

“Israeli murderers”

“I will not speak to you until you take that thing [a kippah] off your head”

These are the voices that the Jewish students hear, and the attacks that Jewish Students are facing on campuses all over the world. The level of hatred might be different from place to place, the level of attack-whether verbal or physical-might differ, but all things considered, this is the new form of Antisemitism.

This new form of Antisemitism puts the State of Israel, the haven and sanctuary of the Jewish People, at the front line of attack. The message is clear –the State of Israel, the only country in the world with a Jewish majority is illegitimate; the outcome will be profound - Jewish persecution world over. This is why, whether in Durban or in Geneva, in Paris, Concordia, or Manchester the direct effect of brutal attacks on Israel is that local Jewish people get hurt. It is the brave Jewish students resisting this trend who are the first to be negatively affected by it.

One thing must be understood –these extreme verbal and physical attacks have one purpose – to put down, mock, and de-legitimise Jews everywhere.

We must be more knowledgeable and more accurate in our responses to certain accusations; we must understand what particular groups mean when they direct their accusations in a certain manner. We have to look behind the words to get to their hidden agenda and we must know how to respond. More than that, Jewish students need to be proactive, to think strategically, and to promote the many important positive aspects of Israel.

Jewish Students are standing at the forefront of the attacks and accusations against Israel, and need to make a difference, to fight back. It is really up to us to take the leading role and to explain to those who are critical but open minded, to those who are liberal and honest, and to those who are not “going with the flow”- what Judaism is, what Zionism is, and what Israel is, and to explain why they are important to Jews the world over. We need to explain what it means to be surrounded by more than 15 hostile dictatorships, some of them more than five times your



country's size and population, when only two of these countries have acknowledged your right to live in your own country.

Of course, as democratic, open-minded students we have the right and the obligation to criticize, and to voice our feelings, but we must do that after learning the facts. We share the understanding that we will always defend and fight, together, for freedom of religion and the security of the Jewish people.

We are proud to present you with the new addition of WUJS *Activate* – in it we have tried to give you informative as well as practical tools to deal with Antisemitic and anti-Israeli propaganda. It is now your responsibility to read and learn this important information so that, if needed, you will be able to use it effectively.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Joby Blume and Alexandra Benjamin who wrote this booklet, Elana Marsden who prepared it for publication, and all those who gave valuable feedback and support.

I hope you all remain active and involved in these important Jewish student activities.

Peleg Reshef  
WUJS Chairperson



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# **THE PRINCIPLES OF ISRAEL ADVOCACY**



# THE AIMS OF ISRAEL ADVOCACY

*Jewish students are often identified as representatives of Israel. This means that Jewish students are often called upon to defend Israel, whether they like it or not. It is important for Jewish students to be prepared for this role, so that they aren't placed in difficult situations, and so that they can help Israel and their own Jewish communities.*

It is important for a Jewish student, however reluctantly they might be involved in Israel advocacy, to be clear about what the general aims, and what his or her personal aims, are in this realm. As with all things, a clear idea of what one is trying to achieve helps effectiveness. Considering the aims of Israel advocacy from a personal perspective ensures a personal commitment to those tasks an Israel activist takes on.

## **Influencing Public Opinion**

The first aim of Israel advocacy is to influence public opinion. Public opinion is very important to Israel, and Jewish communities around the world. Firstly, in the field of international relations, foreign policies are heavily influenced by politicians' perceived electoral interests. If politicians detect public support for Israel, they will be likely to support Israel themselves. Secondly, Israel benefits from public support economically - in terms of willingness to visit Israel and buy Israeli goods. Thirdly, a pro-Israel public climate can prevent difficulties for Jewish communities around the world. Unfortunately, we have recently been able to see the difficulties caused for Jewish communities by anti-Israel sentiment fuelling anti-Semitic activity.

## **Influencing Public Leaders**

The second aim of Israel advocacy is to influence public leaders. It is possible for citizens to influence public officials and leaders directly. Politicians respond to public pressure. If politicians receive dozens of letters calling upon them to support Israel, they will be more likely to do so. Israel benefits from political support abroad, because it ensures a more sympathetic response to Israeli policies.

 For more on this point see Approaching Public Officials – p. 60


## **Influencing the Leaders and Opinion Formers of the Future**

Campuses are the breeding ground for the next generation of politicians and opinion formers. For this reason, the third aim of student Israel advocacy is to influence campus leaders.

Student union leaders might end up as government ministers, student journalists might end up as national newspaper editors. Because people often form and refine many of their political ideas at university, it is important for the long run security of Israel to try to influence student leaders and journalists to understand Israel and to be favourable towards her. In the years to come, Jewish communities will be glad this has been done.

### **Making Things Comfortable for Jewish Students on Campus**

In an anti-Israel environment, things can be difficult for Jewish students on campus. It is hard for Jewish students to feel relaxed when people are constantly criticising Israel unfairly, questioning Israel's right to exist, and creating a climate of fear for Jewish students. Shaping campus opinion to prevent anti-Israel feeling, the fourth major aim of student Israel advocacy, allows Jewish students to avoid uncomfortable situations on campus, allows students to identify as Jewish on campus without fear, and strengthens Jewish life on campus.

 For more on this point see Israel and Jewish Students – p. 67



### **Diverse Opinions**

Some people in Israel believe that some policies enacted by various Israeli governments are damaging to Israel's real interests. They argue that sometimes the international community usefully serves to restrain Israeli governments from taking actions that might be counter-productive in the long term. There are, however, many policies - such as the opposition to terror, and the calls for responsibility from the Palestinian leadership - that Israelis are united behind.

### **Approaches to Israel Advocacy**

There are two main approaches to Israel advocacy that allow Jewish students to achieve the aims outlined above. These approaches apply to everything Israel activists are trying to achieve in their advocacy for Israel. These approaches can be called "*neutralising negativity*" and "*pushing positivity*".

*Neutralising negativity* is about attempting to counter harmful impressions and accusations. This is the side of hasbara that is concerned with the defence of Israel.

"Israel is not bad because...."

"This action was justified because..."

This often involves arguing over sequences of events, attempting to reframe debates to focus on different issues, and placing events in a wider context, so that the difficulty of Israel's situation is understood in a more positive light.

 For more on this point see Communication Styles: Point Scoring and Genuine Debate – p. 8


Neutralising Negativity is usually reactive and responsive.

*Pushing Positivity* attempts to demonstrate the good things about Israel's case. The aim to is make people see Israel in a good light and have sympathy with her.

"Israel is a democracy"

"Israel wants peace"

This often involves setting the agenda, focusing on some of the more positive features of Israel, and taking the lead in attacking the Palestinian leadership in an effort to allow people to view Israel favourably in comparison.

 For more on this point see Being Proactive and Promoting Israel – p. 6

# BEING PROACTIVE AND PROMOTING ISRAEL


*Much of Israel advocacy concerns being reactive and defending Israel against unfair accusations. However it is important that Israel activists are proactive too. Proactivity means taking the initiative and setting the agenda. It means being on the "attack", trying to create positive impressions of Israel. Audiences who have a favourable general impression of Israel are likely to respond favourably when specific issues arise. It is a mistake to only try to promote Israel when she is being strongly criticised in the press.*

## WHY BE PROACTIVE?

### Agenda Setting

The person who sets the agenda will usually win the debate. Reactivity forces Israel activists to be constantly on the defensive ("no, Israel is not all that bad"). However by setting the agenda Israel activists get to determine what to talk about, and can therefore discuss the things they feel help promote the pro-Israel message. Being proactive keeps the right issues in the public eye, and in the way Israel activists want them to be seen. It is much easier to get Palestinian activists defending Arafat against charges of being a corrupt terrorist than it is to explain to disinterested students that Ariel Sharon didn't kill anybody at Sabra and Chatilla (which of course he didn't). It is much easier to feed students falafel at a party than to explain why Zionism isn't racism to a student who doesn't even know what national self-determination is.

To understand the value of agenda setting, consider the 6-Day War of 1967. When the war was inevitable, Israel decided to seize the initiative through a pre-emptive strike. This allowed them to control the war from the beginning. In 1973, the Yom Kippur was fought on the defensive. Many lives were lost in trying to turn the situation around. When Israel activists are proactive and set the agenda they don't need to waste energy trying to turn things around.

 For more on this point see "How to score points while avoiding debate" in Communication Styles: Point Scoring and Genuine Debate – p. 8

### People Believe What they Hear First

Uncritical audiences believe something if they hear it first and hear it often. People tend to believe the first thing they hear about a certain issue, and filter subsequent information they hear based on their current beliefs. Once people believe something, it is hard to convince them that they were wrong in the first place.



### **Motivation and Morale**

Constantly being on the defensive can be demoralising and de-motivating. It is important that Jewish students feel good about Israel and feel positive about their roles. In the short term, defending Israel might give activists a motivating adrenalin rush, but in the long term it is draining and can lead to a feeling of isolation. Being proactive is more enjoyable than being reactive, can leave Jewish students smiling, and can force Palestinian activists to struggle to make themselves heard.

### **Ways to Promote Israel and be Proactive**

There are many proactive events and activities you can organise. Find more ideas in the "practical pointers" section of each of the articles in the 'Israel: Accusations and Rebuttals' section.

- Vigil for Victims of Terror
- Petition for the return of the missing Israeli soldiers
- Solidarity Mission
- Israel information stall at university
- Write an article for university paper
- Demonstrate against Palestinian corruption
- Guest speakers
- Petition for peace
- Yom Ha'atzmaut party
- Rally outside Iranian embassy to denounce support of terrorism
- Israeli music concert
- Israel-themed dinner
- Yitzhak Rabin memorial ceremony
- Israeli film festival
- Campaign against rogue states developing nuclear weapons
- Fundraise for Israeli charities

 For more information see Israel and Jewish Students – p. 67

# COMMUNICATION STYLES: POINT SCORING AND GENUINE DEBATE

*There are two major approaches to communication to use during Israel advocacy. These two approaches are used in different situations, and are designed to achieve very different things. These two approaches – 'point scoring' and 'genuine debate' - require different techniques, and the Israel activist must know how to use each technique at the correct time.*

## **Point Scoring**

Point scoring is a method of communication that prioritises making certain points favourable to the speaker, and attacking opponents of the speaker by trying to undermine their positions. Point scoring communication ought to give the appearance of rational debate, whilst avoiding genuine discussion. The aim of the Israel activist point scorer is to try to make as many comments that are positive about Israel as possible, whilst attacking certain Palestinian positions, and attempting to cultivate a dignified appearance.

Point scoring works because most audience members fail to analyse what they hear. Rather, they register only a key few points, and form a vague impression of whose 'argument' was stronger.

## **When to Point Score**

Point scoring is the correct method of communication to use when the audience is likely to be only partially engaged. Talk radio, student newspapers, large panel discussions, and anything to do with television or the Internet should probably be viewed as having partially engaged audiences, and so point scoring is the right way to communicate in these forums.

Point scoring can irritate audiences who are genuinely committed to thinking seriously about their views on a subject. When talking in serious academic circles, or talking to friends, or answering questions addressed personally by genuinely interested individuals, it is preferable to refrain from point scoring, which can seem shallow, and to instead more fully engage using rational argument.

## How To Score Points Whilst Avoiding Debate

Central to point scoring is the ability to disguise point scoring by giving the impression of genuine debate. Audience members can be alienated by undisguised attacks, so all point scoring needs to be disguised.

To disguise point scoring, comments need to seem to be logical, and to follow from what was said before. Use phrases that subtly change the agenda or reframe the debate to do this:

"Well, that's not really the right question..."

"I don't think we should be focusing on ..., the real point is that..."

"That's an interesting point, but I don't think we can really begin to address it before we think about..."

"You seem to assume that ..., an assumption that's impossible to share. Really, we need to consider..."

"It's a shame that the Palestinian leadership have led the Palestinian people down a dead-end, where conflict and violence leads to tragic situations. Things would have been better if..."

"I really think that we would all be better served by looking forward instead of back at the things that happened over 50 years ago. The past is important to note, but we have to move on in an attempt for peace. That's why I think we would be better served talking about..."

The examples above 'field' the comments that precede them by giving the appearance of addressing what was said. They then go on to reframe the discussion by setting a new agenda.

## What Points To Make

Point scoring needs to be focused. Because the people listening to 'point scoring' are only paying partial attention, only two or three points have a chance of 'sticking'. For this reason, focus point scoring on a few points supporting Israel, and a few points pointing out weaknesses in Palestinian positions. These points should be made again and again, in as many forums as possible. If people hear something often enough they come to believe it. Attempts to make too many different points will result in the audience remembering nothing.

## Points Supporting Israel

**Israel wants peace**, and is willing to make far-reaching concessions in order to achieve this. At Camp David, Israel offered the Palestinians more than any observer had ever thought possible, and their generous offers were turned down.

**Israel is defending itself against terrorists** who deliberately kill civilians going about their daily lives. Every Western country, including Israel, needs to defend its own civilians from terrorists.

### **Points Pointing Out Palestinian Failings**

*Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership can't be trusted.* They have repeatedly broken promises, and gone against the Oslo Accords. Arafat agrees to things, and then attempts to go back on them, including agreeing to negotiate over the Israeli presence in the West Bank and Gaza, and then declaring that violence is justified by this presence, before negotiations are concluded.

*Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership promote violence and refuse negotiation.* Arafat rejected the generous offer Barak made at Camp David outright, and wasn't even interested in negotiations. Arafat is brutalizing his own people by teaching and promoting violence in schools, the media, and political forums.

*Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership support terrorists.* Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hizbollah are terrorist organizations that the Palestinian Authority consistently fails to crack down on. Show arrests are undermined by a 'revolving door' prison policy. Even Arafat's own Fatah organization is involved in terrorist attacks.

*Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority are corrupt.* Billions of dollars in aid has been transferred to the Palestinian Authority, and Palestinian leaders live in luxury whilst Palestinians on the ground are struggling. Much Palestinian suffering is caused directly by the corruption of Palestinian leaders.

### **When Points Can Fail To Score**

Not every point made has the desired effect. It is important to anticipate who an audience is, and to make points accordingly. Audiences are often affected badly by points that don't seem relevant to the debate, or by points that have been used too often, for too many years. 'Old' points can be made to seem more up-to-date by flavouring them with contemporary examples.

An example of a point failing to hit-the-mark would be a mostly anti-Israel audience being told that 'Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East', which they would most likely treat as a tired cliché; an audience of American school children might have been positively influenced by the same point.

### **The Point Scoring Approach In Action**

For an example of the point scoring approach in action, consider the example of a public forum where a Palestinian activist is making the claims below, and an Israel activist responds using the point scoring technique:

*Palestinian activist:* "If Israel wants Arafat to stop terror and crackdown on militants, why does she make it hard for him to operate by denouncing him, attacking his security services, and forcing the infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority to crumble?"

*Israel activist:* "It's a real shame that Israel hasn't been able to have a better relationship with Yasser Arafat recently. *[This sentence avoids debate, turns the attack on Israeli policy towards the Palestinian Authority, and narrows it to focus on Yasser Arafat.]*

"If Arafat's Fatah organization stopped its terror attacks on Israel, then perhaps things would be different. *[Point one - Arafat's own organization is terrorist.]*

"Of course, if Arafat were more trustworthy, things might be better too. *[Point two - Arafat is not to be trusted.]*

"At the moment he is telling the world he's arresting extremists, but the minute after they are arrested they walk out of prison to attack Israeli civilians with Arafat's blessing *[Point three - Arafat lies to the world. Point four - Arafat supports terrorists].*

"The ball is in Arafat's court - he can continue to embrace terror, or he can join Israel back at the negotiating table." *[Point five - Arafat supports terror. Point six - Israel wants peace.]*

### **Genuine Debate**

Traditional approaches to Israel advocacy have often assumed that all talk about Israel should consist of short sound bites and point scoring. This approach can backfire when used on people who are analysing arguments and trying to think deeply, and who really just want somebody to present arguments rationally to them.

### **When To Debate**

Genuine debate is appropriate in forums where people are really attempting to think about the Middle East situation constructively, to consider the issues, and to communicate in an attempt to understand things better.

Genuine debate is fundamentally different to point scoring. In a forum where listeners are mature and interested in the issues, it is appropriate to engage in genuine debate by responding to questions honestly, admitting that things in Israel aren't always perfect, and perhaps even by criticising certain policies as errant. Because the audience or person engaged in dialogue is interested more in content than presentation, in genuine debate it is possible to admit to not knowing answers, being unclear on facts, and so on.

Remember that what seems like a genuine debate might not be. Academic forums can turn quickly into opportunities to condemn, words can be taken out of context, and what might be said to an intelligent audience can always be quoted to a less attentive one later by somebody trying to distort a message.

It is possible to disagree with Israeli policy without undermining positions that are favourable to Israel. Many people who attack Israel do so by attempting to question the legitimacy of her existence. It is possible to disagree with some small aspect of Israeli Government policy without questioning Israel's right to exist, just as it is with Belgian policy, for example. Those who attack Israel's right to exist just because her governments, like all others, have made policy errors, use fundamentally flawed reasoning, and should be opposed using any available technique.

 For more on this point see Personal Politics in Israel Advocacy – p. 28

The implications of admitting to Israeli error are not always as great as one might fear. Those who believe that Israel must be perfect in every way, whilst the Palestinians and others can execute awful policies, are applying double standards to Israel. In private conversation and in friendly settings, it is reasonable to admit that Israel has made mistakes that she attempts to learn from, whilst pointing out that other countries do this too.

# ANTISEMITISM, ANTI-ZIONISM, AND ISRAEL

*For those defending Israel in the Diaspora, a major concern is that legitimate criticism of Israeli policies can either lead to, or be motivated by, Antisemitism. Anti-Jewish sentiment, and particularly action, must be understood, exposed, and vigorously defended against by all Jewish students.*

Antisemitism is an ideology of being opposed in certain ways to Jewish people *qua* Jews. Not everybody who dislikes certain Jews is an Antisemite; an Antisemite is anybody who dislikes Jews simply because they are Jews.

As is all too well known, Antisemitism has had many tragic effects throughout history. The most extreme manifestation of Antisemitism was the Holocaust, but the Crusades, numerous pogroms, and discriminatory policies in most countries have also led to enormous Jewish suffering.

Since the Holocaust, the nature and extent of Antisemitism has changed. In the light of serious examinations of their roles in genocide, many European societies, the Catholic and some European churches, and the academic community, issued declarations, passed laws, and created new norms about the treatment of the Jews. Notably, the Catholic Church renounced its belief that the Jews had been rejected and accursed by God.

Jewish communities around the world have been surprised by a rise in Antisemitic incidents since the start of the second intifada. This has led to an increased need to defend against Antisemitism; at the same time, much Antisemitism has been tied to anti-Israel sentiment, which in turn has led Jewish students to increasingly defend Israel whilst denouncing the outpouring of violent Antisemitic sentiment on Diaspora Jews as racist.

The extent to which Israel has come under attack since the rise of Palestinian violence in September 2000 has been deeply worrying. While dozens of countries are involved in conflicts, suffer from terrorism, and have been forced to use the military to maintain order, Israel consistently leads the news and is at the centre of public debate. It is possible to explain some of this interest by considering the importance of Middle East stability to oil prices, Israel's

location at a civilizational fault line between Islam and the West, and the importance of Israel to the three great monotheistic religions – yet, a suspicion remains that Israel is still uniquely interesting for reasons that focus on her Jewish character. Unfortunately many Christians continue to hold to a replacement theology that posits Jews as rejecters of Jesus, and the Jewish role in Israel as illegitimate following their forfeiting of any divine rights to this land. Myths persist, particularly on the left, about Jewish power, and the Jewish role in capitalism (which has been significant, but not unique), and these lead to resentment. Apparent Jewish manifestations of power rankle both Antisemites on the left, and Christian Antisemites who believe that Jews have rejected their messiah.

### **What's In a Word?**



We use the spelling 'Antisemitism' because (a) Jew hatred is not based on the fact that Jews are Semitic, or Middle-Eastern, peoples (b) Jew hatred is a particular ideology, which should therefore be capitalised in the same way that 'Socialism' usually is.

## **EXPRESSIONS OF ANTISEMITISM**

Not everybody who attacks Israel is Antisemitic. It is legitimate for those who oppose Israeli policies to express this opposition in public, just as it is legitimate for Israel activists to defend Israel. It is important to defend the right of those who disagree with Israeli policies to express their opinions, and to be clear that this is a legitimate part of public debate.

Unfortunately, many who attack Israel are motivated by, or express, Antisemitism. No form of racism, Antisemitism included, has a part in public life. Expressions that, on the surface, appear to be attacking *Israel* often actually attack *Jews*. With Antisemitism so ingrained into Western society, it is possible to inadvertently express Antisemitic views.

### **Mixing Terms**

Israel is a state with some Jewish character, and Jews around the world have the right to live there. However, not every Israeli is Jewish, not every supporter of Israel is Jewish, and not every Jew supports Israel. Conflating the terms 'Israeli' and 'Jew' is often done to express an Antisemitic position, as in "the Jews are brutal occupiers", or "we must fight the Jewish oppressors". For this reason, it is important that Israel activists keep the terms separate, and don't forget that many Israelis are not Jewish.



### **Attacking Jews for Supporting Israel**

It is questionable whether it is legitimate to single out Jews in the Diaspora for active support of Israel. This charge is often built upon fear of Jewish influence, and upon a conception of loyalty that assumes that a hyphenated national (Jewish-American, Jewish-Belgian) cannot be truly loyal if they express an attachment to some other country – no worry that this same charge is never levelled against those who are not from ethnic minorities.

What is beyond doubt is that treating *all* Jews as if they are supporters of Israel when many are not is Antisemitic. Furthermore, attempts to criticise those in public life for support of Israel ought not to focus only on Jews – if this is the case, a charge of Antisemitism needs to be answered.

### **Attacking Jews for Israel's Actions**

There is a level at which it is obvious that attacks on Jews as a result of opposition to Israel are unacceptable – violent or abusive attacks as part of political exchanges are always wrong. More subtle processes also serve to attack Jews – a lack of support for Jewish social services or Holocaust memorial days might be motivated by an opposition to Israeli policies. This is, however subtly, an example of Antisemitism. After all, Jews in the Diaspora aren't responsible for Israeli government policy, and punishing them for the actions of a country that (a) they aren't a citizen of (b) they might not support (c) is ethnically mixed, is deeply problematic.

### **Holding Double Standards for Israel**

Like other countries, Israel does some things that are well received in the international community, and others that aren't. It is legitimate to criticise Israel, but when this is done using significantly different standards from those applied to other countries in similar situations, this can be a cause for concern. It is hard to demonstrate that the application of unusually critical standards to evaluate Israeli policy is motivated by Antisemitism – very often it will stem from support for the 'underdog', or from Arabist sentiment – but when it *does* seem to be racially motivated, this needs to be pointed out and opposed.

## **FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM**

Constantly accusing opponents of Israel of Antisemitism can be counter-productive if this charge is brought lightly. The charge of Antisemitism is a serious one, and should not be used unless there is good cause.

### **Clear Antisemitism**

When faced with clear charges of Antisemitism, act quickly, strongly, and decisively. Document the charge, and argue clearly to support the case. Never tolerate Antisemitism – demand action appropriate to the circumstances – an apology in the media, a reprimand on campus, and so forth. Where Antisemitism becomes endemic, and it becomes impossible to fight each case individually, enlist all available resources to campaign against Antisemitism and to promote tolerance.

### **Possible Antisemitism**

Where an act might have been motivated by Antisemitism, but this is unclear, it is often worth expressing some form of disapproval, but refraining from levelling public charges of Antisemitism. Depending upon the local situation, it is often worth expressing personal upset, saying that one was “hurt, as a Jew” by the controversial act. Wrongly accusing people of Antisemitism can cheapen the charge, as well as being quite unfair. Expressing public disapproval helps to let people know that Jews care about what is said in public, and serves to maintain a red line of clear Antisemitism that respectable public figures know not to cross.

### **Anti Defamation League Website**

[www.adl.org](http://www.adl.org)

There ADL offers a specific section entitled ‘Advocacy for Israel’ aimed at helping activists. This can be a little hard to find from the home page but assuming that it hasn’t been moved one can find it at <http://www.adl.org/Israel/advocacy/>. This section contains ideas on pro-Israel techniques, including a section specific to campus. One can also find a glossary of key terms and chronology of events in Israel’s history and a page of links to similar sites. One of the most useful parts of the resource is the comprehensive “Common Mis-statements about Israel” which covers all aspects of the conflict. The ADL is an American organization and therefore writes for an American audience. The ADL site is updated regularly and therefore remains relevant to the situation.



Resource  
Review

# MEDIA BIAS AND ISRAEL

*There are a number of ways in which the media can be biased against Israel. Media bias ranges from blatant unfairness to very subtle processes that journalists themselves might not be consciously aware of. Israel activists often spend a lot of time attempting to fight media bias, an activity that must start with a proper understanding of the forms bias in the media takes.*

## **Confused Causality**

Confused causality presents a situation or event as if it were caused by another event when it wasn't. By attempting to make an audience believe that one thing was caused by another, blame for the caused thing is shifted onto the supposed cause.

A good example of confused causality comes from media reporting of Palestinian suicide attacks. One can read journalists reporting that a suicide bombing that killed innocent civilians followed an Israeli military attack earlier in the same day. It is clear that operationally it would be impossible for a suicide bomber to be planned as a response to something that happened earlier the same day. However, pro-Palestinian journalists can give the impression that a suicide bombing is caused by prior Israeli actions, thereby attempting to remove blame from the terrorists, and place it on the victims.

Confused causality can work to make certain events seem inevitable. Presenting actions that might otherwise be judged negatively as 'necessary', or 'inevitable', attempts to shift the blame to those who "caused" the action.

This has been used prominently in Palestinian defences of terror attacks. Some pro-Palestinian journalists represent Palestinian terrorism by saying that Palestinians need to defend themselves against "Israeli brutality". These journalists attempt to present terrorism as the only available option, that is, as necessary, or in effect caused by Israeli actions. When terrorism is presented as a necessary evil, it is judged less negatively, as those carrying it out are seen as doing what any 'normal' person would do. The blame lies with those who 'forced' them to take this action: i.e. the Israelis. This however conceals the fact that there is always a choice, and that terrorism is never the only possible response.

A variation on the problem of 'confused causality' is the removal of agency from reporting. Instead of trying to shift the blame for a terror attack back onto the victims ("following an Israeli assassination of Hamas activists, a suicide bomber in Jerusalem...") journalists

sometimes report events as if *nobody* actually caused them to happen ("a bomb went off in Jerusalem, killing...").

Confused causality is very powerful, because it can manipulate people into attributing blame for terrible events on the wrong people.

### **A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words**

Pictures, whether on TV or in a newspaper, carry a far stronger impact than words.

Pictures can be used in a number of different ways to create bias. In some instances an article or item can be perfectly balanced, but if the accompanying pictures only represent one perspective then the reader or viewer will feel sympathy for that perspective. This obviously happens at a simple level - there is a big difference between accompanying an article with pictures of Israeli tanks or of a blown-up Israeli bus. At a more subtle level, audiences can view a violent demonstration from the perspective of violent Palestinians, and so see armed Israeli soldiers, or from the perspective of Israelis, and so see a huge number of violent demonstrators, throwing rocks, burning tyres, and perhaps even wielding guns.

Sometimes the pictures used to accompany an article may not match the words at all. In one notorious example, a picture of a teenage boy, bleeding and confused, was used in the New York Times. The caption suggested that the boy was a Palestinian, who had been attacked by Israeli troops. It later emerged that he was an American Jewish *yeshiva* student. Mostly photographs are not included in so blatantly biased a way. It is rare to catch the media making such an obvious mistake. More often pictures will simply not match a story fairly. A general background piece on negotiations may be accompanied by pictures of Israeli tanks, instead of pictures of the negotiating teams, creating the unfair impression that Israel uses tanks to get her own way in negotiations.

Pictures also can carry different relative strengths. For example an article might be accompanied by two photographs, one a headshot of the Israeli Prime Minister and one of an injured Palestinian child in a hospital bed. In terms of pure balance a picture is shown "from both sides", but the *power* of the pictures is very different.

### **What's in a Word**

Words can be selected from amongst possible alternatives to create a certain impression. There are generally a number of ways of telling a story, and the exact words chosen create value associations for the audience.



The most obvious selective use of value-laden words in describing the situation in Israel are those chosen to label the various groups, individuals, and places involved. Consider the difference between describing somebody as a 'terrorist', 'freedom fighter', 'militant', or 'activist'. Words can be applied in clearly biased ways - consider the differences between reporting firing on the 'settlement' of Gilo, the 'Jerusalem suburb' of Gilo, or on Gilo 'in the West Bank'. More subtle examples might include 'incursion', 'invasion' or 'operation' in the West Bank, or 'assassination', 'murder', or 'preventative killing' of terrorists (or 'freedom fighters', or 'militants').

Word selectivity goes far beyond the labels chosen for groups and places. The language surrounding these labels can also be well chosen to reflect specific viewpoints. Consider the difference between 'flexible Arafat to listen to Israeli demands', 'pressured Arafat to listen to Israeli demands, and 'bullying Israel forces Arafat to listen'. There are always a number of possible ways to tell a story, and the specific words that journalists choose reveal their attitudes, and their biases.

### **Pride of Place**

Certain parts of a news item attract more attention than other parts. The most obvious example is the headline, or a newscaster's summary of the main news. The first paragraph of an article, and introduction to a TV news item are also particularly important. The introduction and start of a news piece are tremendously important in setting the tone of the article.

For example a headline such as "Israel Shells Palestinian TV Station" might lead on to a discussion of the fact that no one was hurt, the reasons Israel took this action, and the problems caused by Palestinian Authority incitement, but the damage to Israel's position is done in the headline.

Even the phrasing of individual sentences can be important. One naturally stresses certain parts of a sentence. This is why the order of phrases is important. Many sources that are biased against Israel will always report Israeli reactions first, regardless of whether the big news story is in what provoked an Israeli response. Consider the difference between "Following a suicide bombing in downtown Jerusalem yesterday, Israeli forces shelled a police station in Ramalah" and "Israeli forces shelled a police station in Ramalah today, after a suicide bomb yesterday in Jerusalem."

## **Unequal Representation**

Unequal representation occurs when two sides in a conflict are given unequal exposure in a story. In its most blatant form only one side is quoted and only one side's views are reported.

One way of checking for unequal representation is to count the lines in a newspaper article, or count time on TV or radio. When representatives of one side are given more space, bias might be present. However quantity alone does not guarantee equality. The type of content can also have a bearing on the weighting of the story.

Sometimes, although both Israel and Palestinians are represented, one side can be more personalised than the other. Personalising arguments allows audiences to empathise with one side, and support their position regardless of the facts. This can happen, for example, if a report includes a clip of an army officer in uniform speaking at an IDF military press conference and then a clip of a Palestinian mother crying at her child's hospital bed, calling for peace. Israeli mothers also cry for peace after terror attacks that kill their children, but the media can often 'conveniently' forget this.

A further example of unequal representation is often exhibited on TV (or radio) news programmes. In an item about the conflict the announcer might say, "Israeli spokesmen said..." and then report their words, thus ensuring that no Israeli voice is heard, and that no Israeli face is shown. The programme might then cut back to the news anchorperson, who might go on to say that "on the line from Jericho we have Abdel Ahmed from the Palestinian Authority", and conduct an interview with him. Even if the Palestinian spokesman doesn't speak for a long time, the fact that their voice is personalised and that they are given the opportunity not merely to make a bland statement but to respond and modify their comments to fit the moment, ensures that the representation is unequal in their favour.

## **Out of Context**


Israel often suffers in the media from a lack of context. This may be because the reporter is biased against Israel or because the nature of the media means that complicated background does not work well. In either case this phenomena can be seen each time Israeli kills a terrorist leader and the media fails to explain who the person is, and what they were planning to do. Similarly, Israeli reprisal attacks are often reported without an explanation of the terrorism that precipitated them.

Reporting something out of context leads to the failure to provide the background information that might allow audiences to understand the event. An action reported out of context can seem morally wrong, even when it is justified by other events.

Sometimes the inclusion of information can remove an item from its proper context. This 'smoke screening' can obscure the real issues. For example, reporting that an army shell landed "in Bethlehem, not far from the site believed to be the birthplace of Jesus" creates the impression that Israel is reckless in her disregard for important Christian sites and lives, and as such is an enemy of the West. Even though there might have been no question of either religious oppression, or of the site itself being hit or targeted, this impression is created by the inclusion of superfluous information.

### **Errant Equivalence**

Errant Equivalence is the drawing of a comparison between two situations, actions, or concepts, which are actually very different from each other. Equivalence is intended to make an audience think that two things are essentially the same as each other; when a speaker uses equivalence they attempt to make something seem better or worse than it is, by exploiting the audience's prior conceptions.

 For more on this point see 'Name Calling' in Seven Basic Propaganda Devices – p. 22

A good example of Errant Equivalence is found in the Palestinian charge that Israel's targeted killing of Palestinian terrorists is itself "terrorism". This charge is designed to make the Israeli policy seem as bad as Palestinian terrorism, by comparing two things that are very different morally, as one targets innocent civilians and the other targets those planning to carry out violent attacks.

Another example of Errant Equivalence in action is the extravagant claim that Palestinians are the victims of a "holocaust". This claim, offensive to Holocaust survivors, tries to gain sympathy for Palestinians by transferring some of an audience's natural sympathy for Holocaust survivors to Palestinians. Attempts are made to draw similarities between two situations, when it is quite clear that there is no systematic and deliberate plan to kill all Palestinians.

Errant Equivalence works by linking concepts that ought not to be linked or compared; this is also essentially how 'Name Calling' works. We can understand Name Calling as unsubtle Errant Equivalence.

# SEVEN BASIC PROPAGANDA DEVICES

*Propaganda is used by those who want to communicate in ways that engage the emotions, and downplay rationality, in an attempt to promote a certain message. To effectively present Israel to the public, and to counter anti-Israel messages, it is necessary to understand propaganda devices.*

This article applies a list of seven propaganda devices to the Israeli situation, and by doing so allows an understanding of some of the ways in which public opinion is fought for in the International arena.

## **Name Calling**

Through the careful choice of words, the name calling technique links a person or an idea to a negative symbol. Creating negative connotations by name calling is done to try and get the audience to reject a person or idea on the basis of negative associations, without allowing a real examination of that person or idea. The most obvious example is name calling - "they are a neo-Nazi group" tends to sound pretty negative to most people. More subtly, name calling works by selecting words with subtle negative meanings for some listeners. For example, describing demonstrators as "youths" creates a different impression from calling them "children".

For the Israel activist, it is important to be aware of the subtly different meanings that well chosen words give. Call 'demonstrations' "riots", many Palestinian political organizations "terror organizations", and so on.

Those opposed to Israel use name calling all the time. Consider the meaning of the word 'settlement'. When applied to Gilo, a suburb of Jerusalem over the disputed 1967 borders, the word 'settlement' creates the unfortunate impression that Gilo is located in the middle of the West Bank, and occupied by religious and political extremists (the image many people have acquired of settlements). That's how the media and opponents of Israel use name-calling. Other examples include referring to the 'war crimes' of Ariel Sharon, talking about 'invasion' of the West Bank when an army unit enters territory under PA sovereignty in order to find terrorists, and so on.

Name calling is hard to counter. Don't allow opponents the opportunity to engage in point scoring. Whenever 'name calling' is used, think about referring to the same thing (e.g. Gilo), but with a more favourable description (e.g. suburb). Consider calling settlements



'communities' or 'villages'. Use the same names back; if somebody talks about Sharon's 'war-crimes', talk about Arafat's war crimes and involvement in terror.

### **Glittering Generality**

Simply put, the glittering generality is name calling in reverse. Instead of trying to attach negative meanings to ideas or people, glittering generalities use positive phrases, which the audience are attached to, in order to lend a positive image to things. Words such as 'freedom', 'civilization', 'motherhood', 'liberty', 'equality', 'science', and 'democracy' have these positive associations for most people. These words mean different things to different people, but are used to gain the approval of an audience, even when they aren't used in their standard ways. Consider the use of the term 'freedom fighter', which is supposed to gain approval for terrorism by using the word 'freedom'. Or, consider why it is so beneficial to bring home the point that Israel is a democracy.

Israel is a Western democracy in the middle of the Middle East. It stands for freedom, equal rights for all; it is a civilized country whose opera, ballet, and world-class universities ensure that Israeli culture is very advanced. These points can be made again and again, so that listeners in the West associate the country with positive concepts, and come to side with Israel.

Enemies of Israel will be keen to cast doubt on Israeli claims to be democratic, to guarantee freedom for all, and so on. In place of these 'glittering generalities' favourable to Israel, they will associate Palestinian behaviour, including terrorism, with terms like 'anti-colonialist' and 'freedom'.

Combating the use of 'glittering generalities' requires undermining the use of a positive term. For example, if a Palestinian speaker claimed that Palestinian terror is only carried out to gain freedom, it might be worth asking if "freedom means killing young children and leaving their parents to bury them?" In this new context, 'freedom' doesn't seem like an appropriate description of Palestinian terrorism.

### **Transfer**

Transfer involves taking some of the prestige and authority of one concept and applying it to another. For example, a speaker might decide to speak in front of a United Nations flag, in an attempt to gain legitimacy for himself or his idea. Some of the symbols that might be used in discussing Israel might include the Israeli flag, or Star of David; Islamic symbols, which might lend a militant speaker the apparent support of Islam, even when what they are saying goes against mainstream Islamic beliefs; non-denominational prayer, which gives a sense of

religiosity to a speaker even when his message is not 'religious'; and the national symbols of a speakers' own country - such as the American flag - which create the impression that the speaker is presenting 'American values'.

Jewish student groups in the Diaspora can use the flag of their own country side by side with the Israeli flag, where appropriate, to lend support to Israel. In a sports-loving country (such as Australia), students can make people aware of famous Israeli sportsmen and sportswomen, in order to transfer positive feelings (about a football team) to Israel.

Palestinian groups notoriously attempt to enlist the symbols of the international community to transfer support and legitimacy. Arafat and the UN flag is a sight we are all accustomed to. These efforts can be undermined by trying to enlist the same symbols, or more powerful ones, first.

### **Testimonial**

Testimonial means enlisting the support of somebody admired or famous to endorse an ideal or campaign. Testimonial can be used reasonably - it makes sense for a footballer to endorse football boots - or manipulated, such as when a footballer is used to support a political campaign they have only a limited understanding of. Whilst everybody is entitled to an opinion, testimonial can lend weight to an argument that it doesn't deserve: if U2's Bono condemned Israel for something that it didn't do, thousands would believe him, even though he was wrong.

Enlisting celebrity support for Israel can help to persuade people that Israel is a great country. Obviously some celebrities are more useful than others. Students are probably a little too sophisticated to be affected by Britney's opinion on Israel, but those associated with intelligence like professors, actors, radio hosts, sports managers and so on can be asked to offer testimonial.

A celebrity doesn't have to fully support Israel to be useful. Quotes can work as testimonial, even when they might be old or out of context.

Opponents of Israel can use celebrity support to strengthen their own message. Undermine this by drawing attention away from celebrity advocates towards 'the issues'. It is not useful to attack celebrities openly, or even to imply that they don't know what they are talking about - this will alienate their supporters. If celebrity support for Palestinian causes goes beyond humanitarian issues to the political, consider coordinating an organized protest. Most celebrities will care more about their public image than they do about the Middle East. Threats

of tainting a celebrity's image will usually persuade them to back away from controversial political issues.

### **Plain Folks**

The plain folks technique attempts to convince the listener that the speaker is a 'regular guy', who is trust-worthy because they are just like 'you or me'. Often politicians present themselves as being from outside the standard 'political cliques' and above political bickering, and then call for tax cuts to help the 'regular guy'. More often than not these politicians are multi-millionaires financed by large corporations, but the plain folks technique allows them to obscure that fact by presenting their 'common' characteristics.

Support for an alleged underdog in a certain situation can often be part of a 'plain folks' agenda. Critics of Israel can paint the Palestinian people as the underdogs, and Israel as an 'oppressor' of a weaker people. This sort of populist position can best be combated by shifting blame for the Palestinian predicament away from Israel and towards Yasser Arafat. As the famous saying goes, "Yasser Arafat has never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity". Point out that the reason Palestinians are still stateless is because their leadership have, tragically and repeatedly, sought war instead of peace, and turned down offers of land for peace.

Pro-Israel activists can use the 'plain folks' technique by speaking as a 'person from the street' whilst supporting Israel. The 'average guy in the street' would happily condemn terrorism in all its forms and support 'Western ideals'. In the context of a debate on the Middle East, this can easily be equated with support for Israel.

Care must be taken when adopting populist positions. There are some ethical boundaries that ought not to be crossed - for example tapping in to general anti-Arab feeling, or Islamaphobia. Remember that Israel can be supported without resorting to mass generalizations or racism.

### **Fear**

When a speaker warns that the consequences of ignoring his message is likely to be war, conflict, personal suffering, and so forth, they are manipulating fear to advance their message. Listeners have deep-seated fears of violence and disorder, which can be tapped into by creating false dichotomies - 'either listen to me, or these terrible things will happen'. Listeners are too preoccupied by the threat of terrible things to think critically about the speaker's message.

Fear is easily manipulated in a climate that is already steeped in fear by the threat of global terror. Arab and Islamic fundamentalist terror has been responsible for 1000s of deaths in the West, and has threatened to bring the entire world into deep economic recession. Nobody wants to face physical risk, or financial ruin. Fear can be successfully utilized by pointing out the consequences of terror. Reminding people that Palestinian terrorists have, in the past, operated throughout the world would strengthen this perception of threat.

Of course, Palestinian speakers can also tap in to fear to strengthen their message. Many people are scared of the instability that might be triggered in the oil-exporting Middle-East if regional conflict erupts. Economic instability could be blamed on Israel by a speaker intent on manipulating his audience.

Fear is difficult to counter, but the Israel activist can do one of two things. First, activists can attempt to decrease fears by calling for rationality - "let's be reasonable here, I think that these ideas are pretty far-fetched, and it's irresponsible to try to scare people for cheap political points". Second, activists can shift the blame for the fearful event - "instability in the Middle East would of course be a terrible thing, which is why Israel is doing all it can for peace. Yasser Arafat on the other hand seems content on supporting terrorists instead of diplomacy, which could drag the whole region to a war than only Arafat seems to want."

### **Bandwagon**

Most people, when in doubt, are happy to do what other people are doing. This is the bandwagon effect. People are happy to be part of the crowd, and subtle manipulators can play on this desire by emphasizing the large size of their support. Although it is reasonable that people are given a chance to find out how many other supporters a speaker or movement has, often it is possible to create the impression of extensive support - through gathering all supporters in one place, or through poorly conducted opinion polls - in an attempt to persuade people who are keen to follow the crowd.

Israel activists can commission opinion polls amongst groups who favour Israel, and use these to give the impression that Israel is the 'team to support'. Demonstrations, and even photos that give the impression of large numbers can help to create the impression that Israel is even more popular than it is.

Remember that playing with perceptions of numbers supporting a cause can be problematic if this means that genuine supporters become complacent.

Palestinian activists' success at creating the impression that they have enormous support is hard to counter. The most obvious and most effective response is to try and seem even better supported. Otherwise, simply start to deal with the issues, especially using 'plain folks' techniques, to gain support that is committed, and not just jumping on the bandwagon.

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### **J-Source**

<http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/myths/mftoc.html>

This is the most comprehensive list of accusations levelled against Israel with solid responses for the Israel activist to use. Rather than just covering the current period this site covers just about everything relating to Israel's existence and history, as well as the current conflicts. The organization behind the site is the American-Israel Co-operative Enterprise, which is an organization that aims to strengthen the U.S.-Israel relationship by emphasizing shared values. As a result this site is strongly geared to the American user but can nonetheless be easily applied by others.



Resource  
Review

# PERSONAL POLITICS IN ISRAEL

## ADVOCACY

*An important moral and tactical question for the Israel activist is whether he or she should always defend Israel, even on occasions when he or she may not agree with the actions of the Israeli government or military.*

Jewish students are often identified as representatives of Israel. People look to Jewish students for explanations of Israel's actions, and unfortunately can exaggerate a lack of support for a specific action to mean far more than it does. When prominent Jews criticise Israel it is very damaging, and Israel needs all the support that she can get. However if a Jewish student genuinely disagrees with an action taken by the Israeli government, why should he or she have to defend it? Could a Jewish student even do a good job half-heartedly defending Israel?

### **Consider the real meaning of the attack**

Try to consider what the intention is behind an attack on Israel. Is the attack really about a single incident or specific policy, or is it being used as an excuse to attack Israel in general. If an attack on Israel exploits a particular incident as an excuse to attack Israel then this ought to be exposed. Here, the incident is not the issue, and the real debate the person attacking Israel wants to have is the wider one.

Take the example of a left wing activist arguing in front of a large crowd that:

"It was disgusting for Israel to destroy those houses, they are oppressing the Palestinian people and forcing them to live in awful conditions. They have no right to be there"

In this case the specific criticism is just used to introduce a wider attack on Israel. Wholeheartedly agreeing with the claim would only lend the apparent support of a Jewish student to a far-ranging attack on Israel. An Israel activist could respond by disputing the general claims: "Regardless of this incident, it is not true to say that the Palestinians as a whole are being oppressed by the Israelis. In fact, 99% of Palestinians are currently living under the Palestinian Authority and not under Israeli rule. Things will no doubt return to

normal when Palestinian terrorism stops." This approach accepts the criticism of Israel, but quickly reframes the debate in a wider context.

### **Criticise Actions not Existence**

In general the role of an Israel activist is to defend Israel (as a country), but not necessarily to endorse every action of the Government, Army or people. If a Jewish activist genuinely disagrees with some action, it is legitimate to say so, provided this is done in a way that defends and supports Israel as a country, and attempts to place the action in the context of a complex situation. This can be done by reframing comments, for example: "I understand where you are coming from, personally I also think that it was wrong of the army to destroy those houses, however you should also consider that Israelis are under a daily threat of terrorist attack and..."

 For more on this point see Communication Styles: Point Scoring and Genuine Debate – p. 8

On some occasions defending certain actions is counterproductive to Israeli interests and morally wrong. For instance when the Jewish terrorist Baruch Goldstein massacred Palestinians at prayer in Hebron in 1994, the Israeli Government condemned the action. It is always right to immediately condemn actions of this sort.

Thankfully it is rare that situations are this clear cut. In more ambiguous situations Israel activists should find ways of accepting justified criticism, while still defending Israel as a country. When an Israel activist accepts a limited criticism of Israeli Government action, it can create an impression of openness and balance, and can increase the chances of being trusted when talking about other issues.

It is important to distinguish between specific and general criticisms of Israel. Even Israel activists who don't support the approach of a specific Israeli Government should be wary of criticising the government in general terms. Criticism levelled at ministers or the government can undermine attempts to defend Israel at a later date. People who start by making specific justifiable complaints about Israel often go on to make unfair general criticisms. Israel activists need to be careful to tread the fine line between being true to themselves and the facts as they see them, and not allowing enemies of Israel leverage to attack Israel unfairly.

There is an argument that Jews living in the Diaspora have no right to get involved in debates about Israeli policy, and ought instead to support Israel's every action. However, the fact remains that Israel activists are used by Israel for an important purpose, and this means that Jewish student activists around the world are involved, in some way, in the Israeli political

process. Furthermore, Jewish students, as the targets of anti-Israel attacks, are affected by Israeli policy. For these reasons, it is generally considered reasonable for Jewish students to express opposition to specific Israel policies, but, as noted above this ought to be done in a constructive manner that doesn't give ammunition to those seeking to undermine Israel's very right of existence.

Winston Churchill once said, "When I am abroad I always make it a rule never to criticise or attack the government of my country, I make up for lost time when I am at home"



Resource  
Review

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### **CAMERA**

<http://world.std.com/~camera/>

The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America offer valuable resources for those wishing to read the media critically. Occasional commentary analyses the ways in which certain events in Israel were covered in the US media, with consistently insightful comments. The approach taken is critical, but not excessively ideological, and most Israel activists would learn from using CAMERA resources.

CAMERA offers a free magazine to US students. The magazine generally focuses on media issues, presenting detailed arguments about specific trends in misreporting, offers a forum for Israel activists to share ideas and reports on their activities, and reviews new books on Israel.



# JUST WALK AWAY: WHEN NOT TO ENGAGE

*Although Israel activists are committed to defending Israel, there are times when it is better not to engage. Unfortunately there are times when attempting to defend Israel cannot help, and might even endanger people. It is important to be aware of the need to walk away from some situations.*

## **When you don't know enough**

An Israel activist will not help Israel if he or she doesn't know the arguments well enough. This is why it is important for Israel activists to educate themselves and remain up to date with the changing situation. When a Jewish student feels out of their depth in a discussion they ought not to continue. Israel activists should not allow themselves to be placed in a position where they are likely to get out of their depth. For example, an Israel activist should not agree to speak in a debate against someone who is likely to be much more experienced and well versed than they are.

## **When the situation is dangerous**

Islamic extremists can be dangerous people. Although most people Israel activists encounter will not come under this label, university campuses are renowned as a hotbed of extremism. There is no shame in walking away from a dangerous situation. When an Israel activist feels threatened they should speak to his or her national Jewish student union and university union.

## **When discussion offers legitimacy to unacceptable ideas**

As well as the danger element, there is a further reason for not engaging with extremists and racists. By entering into a public debate with a racist the Israel activist risks handing them some sense of legitimacy. It is best to maintain a "no platform policy" for racists and extremists.

## **When the debate is set up badly**

The Israel activist must make sure that he or she can control the terms of debate. If a debate is set up badly then no Israel activist will be able to win it. In this situation the Israel activist is therefore better off not participating. For example, an Israel activist shouldn't participate in a debate entitled "Israel: a Terrorist State". In this example the debate is already set up unfairly, and any attempt to defend Israel would go badly. The Israel activist should try to

persuade the organisers to rename the debate, organise some sort of counter-event or demonstration, or just walk away.

### **When there is no chance of changing anything**

There is no point in wasting time and energy arguing over the situation in the Middle East with a student who doesn't want to listen. Militant Palestinians or extreme Leftists aren't interested in considering reasonable arguments. The debate is unlikely to be constructive and no-one's mind is going to be changed. Israel activists need to try to remember the aims of Israel advocacy; when pro-Israel activities don't contribute towards the wider aims of Israel advocacy, they might be a waste of time.

 For more on this point see *The Aims of Israel Advocacy* - p. 3

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### **Jewish Agency**

<http://www.jajz-ed.org.il/hasbara/>

The Jewish Agency's Pedagogic Center offers a variety of resources on *hasbara*. Of particular note are the extensive treatment of how to run a campaign, the variety of Israel activities for all age-groups, and a well-put together glossary. The online equivalent of an old bookshop, with more to find than one could ever have expected, and links to interesting materials on most pages.

# **SKILLS FOR ISRAEL ADVOCACY**



# RUNNING A CAMPAIGN

*Organized campaigns allow Jewish students to exert a huge influence on public opinion and the political process. In the past, Jewish students pressured the USSR to release Sharansky, and help bring about the exit of Jews from Russia to Israel - similarly great goals can be achieved by other Jewish student campaigns that are well run.*

## STRATEGY

### Aims

Campaigns should be based around one or two clear aims. Aims state generally what a campaign is attempting to do. These aims should summarize what a campaign is about, although not deal with methods, which are dealt with later. Example aims for a pro-Israel campaign might be: 'to ensure fair reporting of Israel in the student newspaper' or 'to get the local Hizbollah student group banned from campus'. Note that aims don't spell out exactly what actual actions will be taken; once aims are decided, specific objectives are used to break aims down into measurable components, and then methods specify concrete directions for action.

Practical aims, where a campaign is directed towards some specific action, can work well for two reasons. Firstly, the actual impact of a campaign with a practical aim can be more beneficial than a campaign with a very general aim. (For example, 'build support for Israel' might not help as much as 'lobby for European Union aid for Israel'.) Secondly, it is often easier to motivate activists to campaign on practical issues, where there is a clear aim to achieve. For these reasons, consider choosing quite practical aims for a Jewish student campaign.

### Objectives

Campaigns need to have clear objectives if they are to be focused. Objectives should flow from the aims that are set for a campaign. Objectives are the actions that together lead to the aims for a campaign being met. Campaign objectives should be *SMART*:

*Specific* - objectives need to be clear and precise. 'Getting the Student Union to drop their plans to invite a Hizbollah speaker' is specific. 'Promote Israel' is not specific enough.

*Measurable* - objectives that can be measured are easier to achieve. 'Promote Israel to student leaders' is not measurable, as there is no way of deciding when it has been done or not. 'Promote Israel by holding meetings with twenty student leaders' is measurable. It is a lot easier to attempt to meet measurable objectives.

*Achievable* - There is no point setting campaign objectives that aren't achievable. No student group is likely to 'Bring peace to the Middle East'. Limiting efforts to achievable objectives prevents disillusionment and ensures that energies aren't wasted. Objectives should be set with reference to the organizational resources that can be given to a campaign.

*Related* - to the overall campaign goal - all campaigns should have a general goal towards which they are directed. Objectives that fit into a wider plan are worthwhile, whereas random acts of campaigning generally achieve little.

*Time Limited* - Objectives should be associated with specific dates and times by which they should be accomplished. Without setting times by which objectives should be met, it is easy for campaigns to drag out over a long period of time without achieving much.

### **Long Term Approach**

A campaign should be a long-term plan of action focused on one particular issue. Campaigns are not built overnight. It is important that a campaign develops - if the aims of a campaign are to get an Antisemitic student group banned from campus, then plan clearly the steps that might be involved in this. First, it might be necessary to enlist student support by winning a public-opinion battle. Second, it might be necessary to talk directly to student leadership on campus, because they need to make a decision about banning student groups and removing funding. Third, it might be important to address administration's concerns about freedom of speech, and this might need to be done with the help of Jewish faculty. Fourth, it might be important to mobilize support for the issue to demonstrate strength of feeling, by holding a demonstration.

The important thing to remember is that one can't always start at the end; it isn't always possible to mobilize students for a successful demonstration without laying the groundwork. A long-term, planned, approach to objectives helps ensure campaigns are successful.

### **AUDIENCE**

It is important to define clearly who the audience is for a campaign. Different audiences demand different approaches, and are accessible in different ways. The audience or audiences that are targeted in a campaign should be worked out by looking at the aims and objectives. For example, if a campaign is seeking to get a certain piece of legislation passed, the primary audience has to be politicians, because they have the most influence over this. Secondary audiences might

include any group that can influence politicians, such as the general public or Jewish political organizations.

The decision about who the primary audience for a campaign is determines what methods should be used to meet the campaign objectives. Once the audience is set, the methods can be worked out.

There are, broadly speaking, two potential audiences for campaigns. The first is the public, including students and perhaps the wider community. The second audience is a more limited audience of public and corporate officials. These two audiences are reached in completely different ways. If a campaign aims to get Pepsi to refuse to join the Arab Boycott of Israel again, then the primary audience needs to be people working at Pepsi, and handing out leaflets at college is useful only so far as it creates pressure on Pepsi.

### **Methods To Use With The Public**

Student support for Israel is valuable in and of itself. Try to get student support, and the support of the general public, in the following ways:

- Give out leaflets.
- Put up emotive posters.
- Get articles in the student paper.
- Talk to people one-on-one to persuade them.
- Perform high-visibility stunts in central places.
- Invite inspiring speakers, and especially high-profile speakers.
- Run a related charity campaign, to raise money (and awareness) for a relevant cause.
- Build coalitions with other groups and run joint awareness-raising events with them.
- Show films with an Israel or peace theme.
- Hold cultural evenings or Israel fairs, with falafel, belly-dancing, trance music, and so on.
- Run small components of larger campaigns, such as a briefing on the Middle East as part of a nuclear awareness week.
- Organize consumer boycotts of certain companies, and let their management and other companies know why they are being boycotted.

Remember to go off campus to get support from the general public. Often it is possible to work with schools, or near schools, to get the support of children. Ask students to talk to their parents about a campaign, to try to build support. Some methods for raising awareness and garnering support can work be made to work in a 'pyramid', where supporters enlist people they know. Ask

supporters to give out leaflets, help raise money for a charity campaign once they have already given a bit of money, or talk to their friends to build wide support for a campaign.

### **Methods To Use With Public Officials**

Before engaging in a campaign to influence a certain politician or company, it is first necessary to do a bit of research. There is nothing worse than organizing a boycott of a company or demonstration against a politician when they didn't even do what you thought they did. Next, once you are sure that they really are as bad as you suspect, approach them formally and ask them to change. Although in many situations there is little chance that there will be a big change in behaviour just because you ask, a polite approach at the start of a campaign keeps things civil. Documenting what is said in this meeting ensures that they can't lie about what went on later.

### **Reaching Officials by influencing students and the public**

Student support for certain issues can also create pressure on decision makers. Once student support has been obtained, work to demonstrate the strength of this support. If a campaign aims to get student support in order to show leaders that their supporters want them to take certain action, it is important to show people how strong this support is.

- Take photos of events, and send them to leaders, with short write-ups of what took place.
- Compile petitions, and present these to the relevant leaders.
- Write letters to leaders and politicians, and get people to sign them, or send their own version.
- Publish a poll or survey that quantifies the strength of support for an issue.
- Hold a demonstration.
- Hold a photo-stunt and invite the press.
- Get on to radio and TV, or get interviewed by the newspaper, to show that an issue is 'hot'.
- Write letters to newspapers, and try to get the press to give an issue coverage.

### **Approaching Officials Directly**

Most democratic representatives, including student leaders, are accessible to voters and other interested parties. It is possible to write to, and to meet with, most leaders, in most countries. Follow the general guidelines for approaching officials when approaching them directly. Primarily, this means being polite, making it clear that you are approaching them as an individual, being factual, and being clear about what action they are expected to take.



## PROCESS

### Organizational Planning

Once it has been decided to organize a campaign, decisions need to be made about what resources will be given to organizing it, and who will take responsibility. The very first question that needs to be answered regarding a campaign is who will take overall responsibility. This can be a few people, but one person should have overall administrative control, and coordinate the others.

 For more on project teams see: [www.wujs.org.il/activist/leadership/manual/committee/self\\_directed.shtml](http://www.wujs.org.il/activist/leadership/manual/committee/self_directed.shtml)

Campaigns can always have more time dedicated to them. Before a campaign is planned, decisions need to be made about how much time can be given to it. There is no point deciding to organize a massive campaign if it is more of an organizational priority to sell tickets to a Jewish club night. Make sure that aims and objectives are suited to the emphasis that a campaign is to be given.

Once a general sense of how big a campaign is going to be has been obtained, it is important to start to put together a core group of activists to run it. Whilst one person needs to be responsible for coordinating others, activists should have specific tasks and responsibilities delegated to them. Generally, it doesn't make sense to have too many activists involved in running a campaign from the start. If too many people are involved, but aren't very busy, they might get frustrated and bored. It's always possible to enlist extra support when needed later on.

Campaigning can require resources. Start by clarifying what money is available. If there isn't enough money for the costs that might arise (printing, buying props for photo stunts, room hire, paying for speakers and so on) then raise more. Turn to the local Israeli Embassy, Jewish community, WUJS, or other pro-Israel groups in order to obtain additional funds.

Where possible, make alliances with organizations that might want to get involved in helping to run the campaign. Divide responsibilities clearly from the start, possibly in writing. The benefit of involving other organizations is simply that two organizations can get more done than one can.

### Research

Once a general idea of what the aim of a campaign is going to be has been obtained, and the organizational infrastructure for realizing the campaign is put together, one of the first things that needs to be done is research.

Although campaigns generally aren't conducted like intellectual arguments or debates, they do need to be backed up by facts and expertise. Before a campaign is launched, start gathering information from trust-worthy sources.

Find out the facts of an issue, and work out the argument that the campaign will be present. For example, if a campaign aims to stop a Hamas speaker from speaking in the local student union building, then find facts about Hamas. Find out what the organization stands for, and its policy statements. Collect facts about terror attacks Hamas has carried out. Find the relevant policies of your national government, your student union, and so forth. With this information - collected, analysed, and organized - a campaign is ready to proceed.

It is important to attempt to understand the 'other side' when organizing a campaign. Read materials and speak to people that might give a sense of what the other point of view is. It is easier to campaign against something one understands, with a sense of what the problems with it are.

### **Communications**

Because campaigns run over a period of some time, it is important to maintain good communications throughout the campaign. Keep activists informed of what has been achieved, and what still needs to be done. It is easy for a campaign to run out of steam because nobody reports the good news that might motivate people.

Say thank-you to people who help run a campaign. It is often easy to forget to thank people who help a lot, because they are usually ideologically committed, and doing it because they really want to. Even so, thanking people can energise them and leave them ready to contribute more.

### **Follow Progress**

It is important to measure how things are going. Keep a list of objectives, (which should all be measurable) and note when they need to be achieved by. Then, as things are done, cross them off the list.

As a campaign develops, some objectives might not be met. This happens. However, what is important is that decisions are made about which objectives to drop, instead of just giving up on things. Similarly, sometimes objectives will be met earlier than expected. For example, an objective might be 'to meet twenty student council members and present them with arguments for supporting Israel'. Should a campaign continue to meet council members after twenty have already been met? Maybe. This decision needs to be made sensibly, and with the facts available.

### **Learn From Mistakes**

Mistakes happen. Sometimes campaigns don't go as well as we might like. This is, unfortunately, the way things are. However, mistakes can be a valuable opportunity to learn. If something doesn't go according to plan, note why, and think of ways that the same mistake can be avoided in the future.

### **Share Effective Ideas And Resources**

Jewish student activists are full of energy and vitality. Jewish students, led by WUJS, managed to contribute to the freeing of Sharansky from the USSR, to the ending on quotas of Jews who could study in European universities, and recently to the public battle over anti-Zionism and Antisemitism at the UN's Durban Conference.

 For more on Jewish Student Campaigns see <http://www.wujs.org.il/activist/wujs/publications/rootkeeper.shtml>

Where great campaigning ideas and materials work, it is worth passing them to other Jewish student groups, to help them in their work. Jewish students are fighting the same battle, and together, it can be won.

# FORGING CAMPUS ALLIANCES

Encouraging support for Israel on campus, and limiting anti-Israel activity on campus relies heavily on the ability of Jewish student groups to form strong alliances with other groups on campus. Support can then be traded on key issues, ensuring that Jewish students' interests are met.

## PROCESS

### **Mobilise Students to Get Involved on Campus**

Before a Jewish student group can consider forming alliances, it is necessary to mobilise students to build the strength of the group. As many Jewish students as possible need to be encouraged to get involved in campus life. Jewish students ought to attend student union meetings. As many Jewish students as possible ought to be encouraged to join clubs and societies that are active in campus politics. Jewish students should be mobilized to vote in every campus election, to stand for election as student representatives for any and every forum, and to write letters to campus newspapers.

It isn't necessary to attempt to fill the top positions on campus; the main point of mobilization is to ensure that Jewish students are a strong electoral force. In fact, powerful Jewish student leaders can occasionally work against the wider efforts of Jewish student groups; in an effort to prove their neutrality and assert their independence, Jewish leaders can refuse to cooperate with Jewish groups.

Mobilisation of Jewish students is a question of creating a culture where involvement in campus activity is seen as the norm, and of persuading students individually to get involved on campus. This takes time, but is essential in the long run for defending Jewish students and Israel.

Jewish students who are already involved on campus, but who might not be closely involved with Jewish student activities, ought to be approached and befriended in an effort to include them in Jewish student mobilization efforts. Try to explain the need for Jewish student solidarity, and encourage them to help other Jewish students as necessary.

### **Support Active Students**

Once Jewish students are involved in campus activities, they need to be supported. It is important to check that people are coping in their positions, to deal with any difficulties that might arise, and to ensure that they are enjoying things at least enough to stay involved.

It is important to stay in touch with Jewish activists, so that when it is necessary to mobilize Jewish students for some reason or other, contact is considered normal and doesn't come 'out of the blue'. Meetings or mailings for Jewish activists, or even a special party can ensure that they feel wanted, and remain happy to work for the good of Jewish students.

### **Demonstrate Potential Strength**

Jewish student involvement on campus needs to be recognized by mainstream campus groups. This is done by making Jewish student presence visible in a subtle way that other campus groups understand. For example, Jewish students can sit together, hold a visible 'caucus' meeting before a student council meeting, or if the situation on campus is comfortable, turn up at a meeting wearing 'Jewish' T-shirts.

### **Concentrate on Personal Relationships**

Build personal relationships with campus leaders and opinion formers. This can be done in a variety of ways – extend invitations to key students to attend Jewish events, such as Friday night meals, speaker meetings, or parties. If you have the money, you could even sponsor a trip to Israel for student journalists or such like. Meet individually with campus leaders and befriend them. Listen to them; find out what they believe is important. Whenever a student leader does something that went well, consider dropping them a note to say 'well done'.

Don't leave managing your relationships with campus leaders to chance. Be methodical. Make a target list of the key students that you will need as allies. If you want, even keep records of your conversations with them, and about them. Spread your net wide, and target students whom you believe are likely to become leaders on campus in the future.

### **Form Alliances with Powerful Groups**

The point of mobilising Jewish students to get involved on campus, and of befriendng campus leaders, is to allow the forging of alliances with powerful groups on campus. If Jewish students work together as a strong electoral block, if Jewish representatives in clubs and societies are busy trying to strengthen a pro-Israel agenda on campus, and if Jewish leaders are friendly with the leaders of other campus groups, it ought to be possible to form strong alliances. Student leaders will recognise that Jewish support on key issues could be helpful. Where these same

student leaders have no strong opposition to a 'Jewish agenda' – such as support for Israel, support for ethnic minorities, and such like – they will likely be willing to support these issues in return for support on other issues by Jewish students.

Which groups to try to form alliances with obviously depends upon the situation on each individual campus. In general, alliances should be made with groups that are either natural allies or else neutral towards Israel and the Jews. For example, middle-of-the-road political groups, some moderate Christian groups, and ethnic minority groups where these aren't dominated by radical Moslems. The more powerful a group is on campus, the more useful an ally they will make. Take a long-term approach to alliances – it is often worth giving support to a group even when it doesn't give any immediate benefit, just to build reliance and obligation on their part.

### **Exchange Support on Key Issues**

Once an alliance is formed, and there is a general understanding that support will be exchanged on key issues, begin to exploit this relationship. Use the fact that Jewish students are highly active on campus to deliver support to allies on certain issues; in return for Jewish support, ensure that allies deliver votes and support on issues that are important to Jewish students.

It is possible to be pretty open about trading support, but of course it is important to keep in mind university and student union regulations.

Remember that it is worth under-promising and over-delivering. Not every Jewish student will go to vote in a student election that they know little about. Not every Jewish student who goes to vote will follow the 'official' line. Be careful not to make enemies by promising the world and delivering Albania. Once allies come to believe that Jewish support is dependable, they will be very keen to ally with Jewish students.

## **ISSUES**

### **Alienating Some Students**

Believe it or not, student politics doesn't only involve Israel and Jewish issues. Some other important issues are discussed, and many of them are deeply important to some Jewish students. Issues such as student finances, free speech on campus, and environmentalism are important to many active Jewish students. It is important to try not to alienate too many Jewish students from organised Jewish activities as a result of campus alliances that they are opposed to. To try to reduce the risk of alienating Jewish students, steer away from issues that are unpopular with a number of Jewish students, and ensure that Jewish students understand that although there is a

need to trade support on certain issues, those who disagree are still welcome within the Jewish student community.

### **Ethical Limits**

There need to be limits to what Jewish student groups will do in order to garner support for Israel. Jewish students should not end up supporting unethical and un-Jewish policies in their attempts to get students to support Israel. Sometimes, if it is impossible to get support for Israel without going against common standards of decency, Jewish students need to walk away. It ought to be possible to support Israel without seriously harming the legitimate rights of others.

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### **The Clash of Civilizations: *Samuel P. Huntington***

Huntingdon's thesis is that international relations are built around relations between eight civilizations –Western, Islamic, Sinic (China and Chinese cultures), Hindu, Japanese, Latin American, African, and Christian Orthodox (Russian). National decisions are based around civilizational loyalties – Islamic Turkey will be refused entry to the Western European Union, support for Moslem Bosnians was given mainly by Islamic countries, and so on. Cultures clash primarily because Western, Islamic, and Sinic cultures all believe that they are superior, and both the West and Islam are universalistic. Israel, as a country on a fault line between two civilizations, is the subject of conflict.

Huntingdon's civilizational focus gives an interesting and useful lens through which to examine international relations. Examples are generally convincing, although Huntington perhaps ignores similarities between civilizations which are all part of an institutionalised world system. For the Israel activist this book is particularly useful primarily because it gives a framework within which to understand the Israel-Palestinian (Jewish-Islamic) conflict.



Resource  
Review

# PREPARING A SPEECH

*Even the best public speakers need to prepare. In fact, the best public speakers are good because they prepare. Particularly in a particularly charged area such as Israel advocacy, it is important to prepare before speaking in public, both in terms of content, and in terms of style.*

## FIRST STEPS

### The Need To Prepare

Remember the well-known maxim:

*Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.*

Preparation is a process that can be worked through mechanically, step-by-step. Expect preparation to be slower when you first start out speaking in public. Eventually, as well as getting better through practice, it will be possible to build a collection of speeches that can be adjusted to different situations, and this will make the process much quicker.

### Research The Audience

A well-prepared speech given to the wrong audience is as bad as a terrible speech given to the right audience. It is vital to learn who the audience is going to be, and tailor speeches to them. There is a big difference between talking to a group of Christian Zionists and talking to a mixed group of Jewish and Moslem students. Adjusting to the audience means delivering a speech at the right level; telling the audience, roughly, what they want to hear; and allowing the audience to feel that you care about them. Before planning a speech, find out the following information about the audience (or expected audience) from the organizer of the event, or from people who are familiar with the setting:

- Numbers expected to attend
- Level of understanding of the subject
- Likely opinions on the subject
- What the audience *needs* to get from the talk
- What the audience *wants* to get from the talk

This information will allow a speech to be written and delivered in the right way. Because there is such a big difference between speaking to a big hostile audience and a small friendly one... find out which you will be talking to, and prepare accordingly.



When talking about Israel it is likely that the audience will consist of three main groups - allies, neutrals, and opponents. Opponents, where these are people who are deeply anti-Israel or anti-Zionist, are unlikely to have their minds changed in any sort of public venue. In a mixed audience, it is generally more important to motivate and reinforce allies, and persuade neutrals, than to answer the charges of opponents. In this setting, one needs to attempt to point-score in an attempt to impress neutrals, rather than to engage in genuine dialogue.

### **Gathering Materials And Information**

Israel advocacy is not only about factual argument. However, it is still important to prepare strong arguments and points, even if they wouldn't really stand up to closer examination. Pro-Israel speakers need to be familiar with the topics that they are going to be dealing with. It is important to read before preparing to talk about Israel - if you don't know what the Lebanon War was, you won't be able to say why Israel wasn't directly responsible for the Sabra and Shatilla massacres. Collect information about the subjects you are going to be talking about, take notes, and make sure you are generally familiar with the background to things.

The sooner that you can start gathering information the better. Early preparation allows you to start 'sleeping' on the material that you are working with, to start making notes on your thoughts, and to ask people who are familiar with *hasbara* for information that you might not have found yourself.

It is important to work through the information that you collect. Sort information into categories, and separate out information according to what you think is 'vital', 'important', and 'okay'. Start thinking about arguments, points, and rebuttals at this stage.

## **WRITING A SPEECH**

### **Purpose Of Speech In One Line**

The first step in writing a speech is to work out, in one line, what the speech is intended to convey. This line should bring together all of the arguments and points that will be made in the speech.

For example, the purpose of a speech given to a neutral but interested audience of students about Israel's attempts to make peace at Camp David (2000) might be 'To persuade the audience that Israel has made extensive attempts to achieve peace, and that these attempts have failed has not primarily been Israel's fault'. This one line purpose will then drive the rest of the speech. Everything in the speech should be based on driving home the one simple message

('Israel has tried to make peace, and the fact it hasn't managed isn't Israel's fault') that the purpose contains. The message a speech gives should be agenda setting, and not a response to the arguments others bring. Once the purpose of the speech is clear, the rest is much easier to prepare. Working out the purpose should be done before too much work is done on writing the actual speech, in order to keep the speech sharp and the message simple.

Remember that the purpose of a speech is dependent upon the audience. It is possible to convey a more complex message to a sophisticated audience. Where an audience will consist of many people who are opponents of Israel, remember that the purpose and message of a speech is better aimed at neutral listeners and allies.

### **Attention Grabber**

A speech should have a good attention grabber to get the ball rolling. A visual cue, or a surprising and interesting opening line work to engage the audience.

### **Organize Content**

It is important not to try and do too much in a speech. Limit yourself to a few major points, all contributing to the one message of your speech. Arrange the points into clear sections.

Clear organization is very important. Most people have a hard time understanding speeches, as it is hard to organize information into chunks without an idea of the overall structure of the speech.

Clear organization allows listeners to sort information as they receive it, instead of always wondering why a speaker is saying what they are saying. If sections of a speech are well organized, and if listeners are told in advance what the sections are going to be, they are able to create a mental map of the speech they are listening to, in order to sort the information well.

### **Transitions**

It is important to provide clear transitions between sections of a speech. This is to help listeners know how to sort the information that they are receiving, and to allow them to tune back in if a certain section bored them or if their attention got lost.

Without clear transitions one runs the risk of losing listeners near the start of a speech (because they don't know how to sort the information they are getting) and never grabbing their attention again (because there is no suitable re-entry point). Suitable ways of signalling a transition from one section of a speech to the next include:

- Use bridging words or phrases ("finally"; "to sum up these ideas"; "now, moving on").
- Tell a personal story, to break up the speech and draw people back in.
- Use a visual prompt like an overhead, with something that sums up what was said.
- Pause, take a breath, and look at the audience.
- Change positions to grab attention (for example move to the front of the stage and keep talking).
- Set out what is going to be said in the next section ("Now I am going to move on to talk about Israel's attempts to make peace. This will consist of three parts. First, I'm going to tell you about Israeli offers of land for peace. Second...").
- British Prime Minister Tony Blair's special: "and I say to you..."

Make sure that transitions aren't too short. If listeners don't know how to 'sort' what is being said, they will stop listening. Transitions should make up a sizable part (around 10%?) of a speech. It is better to say a little and be well understood than to say a lot but be ignored.

### **Personal Stories And Humour**

Powerful speeches engage the emotions. Personal stories, or stories told from a human dimension, can often do this well. What better way to make a point about victims of terror than to tell a story about them? More powerful than telling a story about a child in hospital who might never walk again is telling a story about one's own visit to see that child in hospital, and how sad it was to see it. This, rightly or wrongly, gets the audience to tune in, listen, and take notice. It is much easier to listen to a story, especially an emotionally charged one, than to listen to abstract concepts. Stories make powerful points and get the audience's attention. (Just think - would Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have a Dream' speech have been as powerful if he had said 'many people rightfully demand'?)

Jokes can often liven up a presentation. Obviously remember that not everybody is good at delivering jokes. For those people who aren't, it is often better not to bother. A bad joke is definitely worse than no joke at all. Moreover, jokes aren't always suitable - don't tell jokes about terrorism, Palestinian children, or other sensitive subjects, unless (or even if) you are sure that the audience will be receptive. Finally, avoid making fun of the audience. Although it might get a laugh from some people, others are bound to be offended.

### **Effective Language**

Once the bulk of a speech has been written, transition points added, and a few personal stories and jokes inserted to liven things up, it is worth going through the speech to make the language

more powerful. Most professional speechwriters use a couple of common tricks to make their speeches effective:

When listing things, use lists of three. For some reason, these sound better and are easily remembered. Master politician Tony Blair used it on his way to a landslide election victory when he said that the British Labour party's priorities for government would be 'education, education, education'.

Use inflected pairs. That is, repeat a line twice, but with a subtle change. For example, in John F. Kennedy's inaugural address: "ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."

### **Make Notes Or Cards**

Once a speech has been written, it needs to be put into a format that is easy to read. Many people need the full text of a speech printed out to read. For reading from paper, print with double spacing, and insert 'stage directions' (such as when to pause, when to use visual cues) in bold. The danger of reading a speech from paper is that it can prevent the reader from making eye contact, and seem clumsy. Make sure that a speech is delivered with plenty of pauses and eye contact if read from paper.

Index cards can be used to record major points to be made, and then used to deliver a speech. This is only suitable for those who are comfortable speaking in public, and who know the subject matter well enough to talk about it without knowing in advance exactly what they are going to say.

When preparing a long speech, try to make a condensed version of the same speech, for use at another time, or in case of problems at the event itself.

## **ADDITIONAL PREPARATION**

### **Prepare Visual Aids And Materials**


Particularly in the field of Israel advocacy it is important to use any possible avenue to get one's point across. Use overheads, slides, pictures, flyers, and handouts to reinforce the message conveyed in a speech.

If pictures speak a thousand words then it makes sense to use some pictures to strengthen an argument.

Rather than just saying that the Palestinian Authority has used children for political means, and put them at risk by doing so, why not show a picture of Palestinian children 'playing' at being terrorists, and so on. Distribute pictures on leaflets, show a video, or use an overhead projector. Statistics, graphs, and raw facts can lend an air of immense authority to a pro-Israel speech. However, it is difficult to read a list of statistics to an audience whilst keeping their attention. Instead, use visual aids to convey this information.

 For more on this point see 'A Picture is Worth 1000 Words' in Media Bias and Israel – p. 17

Handouts and flyers can allow members of an audience to remember what they have learnt, suggest ideas for where they can look for more information, and even allow them to share what they have heard with others. Preparing handouts is relatively quick once a speech has been written, and can increase its effectiveness.

 For more on this point see Making and Distributing Leaflets – p. 64

### **Prepare For Questions And Hostile Points**

In most forums, the audience will be given the opportunity to ask questions. Proper preparation involves anticipating some of the questions that are likely to be asked, and thinking about the answers that should be given. Prepare factual material in advance for three or four areas where questioning can reasonably be anticipated. Having facts at one's fingertips is the first part of dealing with questions and a hostile audience.

### **Practicing**

If there is time, make sure to practice delivering a speech. Pay particular attention to time. A good speech will be ruined if all the audience remember was that the speaker got upset and flustered when they ran out of time. Ask friends to listen and give feedback, or use a tape recorder or camcorder. Feedback can be particularly useful in pointing out to a speaker what words they subconsciously repeat when pausing ("like", "ummm", "kind of" and so on).

### **Confirm Practical Details**

Eliminate the possibility of embarrassing problems by checking practical details in advance. Make sure that the location and time are set, that technical arrangements are as expected (is there a microphone? An overhead projector or video?), and that there aren't going to be any surprises with the speaker line-up or timings.


# SPEAKING IN PUBLIC

*Once a speech is prepared, it still needs to be delivered. A well prepared speech can make it a lot easier to speak well in public, and a lot harder to speak terribly, but it is still important for Israel activists to learn and practice how to speak in public before doing so.*

## **Nerves**

Mark Twain has words of encouragement for all those who fear that they are the only people who get nervous about speaking in public - 'there are two types of speakers: those that are nervous and those that are liars'. It is normal to get nervous before speaking in public. This is made even worse when talking about an emotional topic, in front of some hostile audience members, as is the case with Israel advocacy.

Proper preparation prevents most nerves. By making sure that a speech is well written for the right audience, that it has been practiced, and that questions have been anticipated, speakers can generally start to relax a bit.

 For more on this point see Preparing a Speech – p. 46

Most experts (in many fields) practice visualization techniques to reduce nerves and help performance. Imagine giving a speech to a room full of people. Feel the eyes, the lights, and the sweat. Stay calm. Imagine how it will go, how nerves won't be a problem. Successful visualization can act as a realistic trial run for a speech.

Do relaxation and breathing exercises. Practice taking deep breaths, and shaking the shoulders to release tension. Open the eyes and mouth wide and then screw them up, repeatedly, to relax the facial muscles.

Getting to know the venue and the audience beforehand can also help nerves.

If possible, arrive a little early, look around, and make small talk with some of the audience. It is better to be slightly nervous with two people than with two hundred people.

Once delivering a speech, don't bother apologizing for nerves. People tend not to notice too much, unless they are told. Instead, focus on the content of the speech. Try to turn nervous energy into positive energy, harness nerves and turn them into enthusiasm.

## Body Language And Gestures

Successful communication involves verbal and non-verbal components. Effective speakers use body language and gestures to project the right image and make their speeches work better.

- Make eye contact with members of the audience.
- Use facial expressions to communicate. Smiling works to convey a likable, non-aggressive image.
- Use an open body posture. Face the audience, and deliver at least some of a speech without the 'barrier' of a table or lectern. Moving to deliver the speech from a different position on stage can mark transitions, but be careful not to move around too much whilst speaking, as this can be distracting.
- Use hand gestures to emphasize points.
- Point using the back of the hand, or the thumb. Note that effective speakers never point at the audience with a finger as this is seen as aggressive. Other aggressive gestures, which should be avoided at all costs when talking about Israel, include standing with hands on hips, and holding both hands behind the head.

## Voice

Vary one's voice to retain the interest of listeners. Vary the speed a speech is delivered at and introduce pauses. Try to feel emotion whilst talking to convey feeling with one's voice. Lower one's voice to draw the audience in, perhaps whilst telling a personal story, and then raise it again to make a point.

It is very hard to listen to one's own voice, and for this reason it is difficult to improve *how* one delivers a speech. Try asking others for pointers, or more usefully, try recording one's own voice and then practicing using one's voice to keep listeners engaged.

## Questions

In an area like Israel advocacy where it is very unlikely that the audience will be fully satisfied by a speech, it is inevitable that questions will be asked. These will generally divide into three types - genuine questions (somebody wants to know something, or the speakers opinion on something), supporting points, and hostile points. (For example "But don't you think that Israel is actually racist?" - which is more of a hostile point than a genuine question.)

- It is important to remember that questions should be anticipated and prepared for. Not all questions can be anticipated, but many can.

👉 For more on this point see 'Communication Styles: Point Scoring and Genuine Debate' – p. 8

- Distinguish between questions that should be answered genuinely, and those that shouldn't. Israel advocacy is about setting the agenda. If somebody uses a question to make a point, it doesn't need to be answered, only addressed.
- Listen carefully to questions when they are being asked, and write down keywords so that you don't forget them.
- Try to get for those asking questions to stand up when speaking so that the entire audience can hear. With genuine questions, repeat the question before answering, to ensure that everybody knows what you are talking about.
- Answer questions that need to be answered quickly. Nobody listens for very long during questions and answers, and it is important to be concise.
- Address answers to the entire audience, not just the person who asked the question. This means avoid saying "you" when replying to questions, except to thank the audience member for asking the question.
- If someone asks two questions, treat them as two separate questions, instead of grouping them together.
- Where questions are particularly detailed, offer to answer them later, explaining that the answer is a bit too detailed to address to the entire audience.
- Always stay friendly and keep smiling, especially when being asked hostile questions. Body language is particularly important during confrontation, and neutral audience members will tend to side with the person who kept their cool the best.
- When asked a hostile question, don't try to answer it. Rather, try to counter the point that was made by making another point. So, for example, if an audience member says that "Israel is racist and colonialist" just say that "well, that's one point of view, but it's important that members of the audience know that Israel allows many Arabs to serve in the army, that there are many Ethiopians doing well financially and socially in Israel, and that countries such as Iraq expelled Jews and confiscated their property, something that Israel has not and would never do to its own citizens." Note that this isn't really answering the question, but it does deal with it, calmly and in a non-confrontational way.

### **Addressing Other Speakers**

Often the Israel activist wants to address an audience but has not been asked in advance to make a speech. There are many situations where it is necessary to talk briefly without prior warning, or to ask questions to other speakers.



The main key to making remarks without time to prepare properly is to be simple. Decide quickly on one clear message. Don't try to memorize a small speech, or even to write one down. If necessary, write down a few key points, and maybe an opening line, but that is all.

When addressing another speaker, address them politely, and by name, to start your point. Then make your point to the audience, not to the speaker. Start confidently, and by giving the audience an idea of what you are going to talk about. Try to relate your points to what the speaker said. Audience members are generally unprepared to listen to long speeches from members of the audience. Be short and to the point, and try to disguise any points as questions.

## **IMPROVING**

### **Ask For Feedback**

As with all areas, the key to improvement is to take time to gather feedback, to think about one's own performance, and to practice doing things differently. Gather feedback by asking friends for suggestions for improvement, and comments on how you did. Remember that nobody is likely to communicate like a top politician without a bit of practice. View mistakes as an opportunity to learn, and to improve.

# LETTER WRITING

## LETTERS TO THE PRESS

### REASONS FOR WRITING TO THE PRESS

#### **To Correct or Complain about Articles**

Unfortunately there are a great many examples of media bias about Israel, and factual errors in reports on Israel. Editors are influenced by reader feedback, and will sometimes adjust their coverage to reflect what they perceive as what readers want. When readers complain about specific cases of factual errors in reporting, editors will usually publish corrections.

#### **To Set the Agenda**

Not every letter Israel activists write to the press needs to be responsive. It is important to attempt to set the agenda – by pointing out things readers might not have known, or by mentioning upcoming events. Often agenda setting is done through press letter pages, but it is also possible to get newspapers, especially the local press and student papers, to publish opinion pieces.

### HOW TO WRITE TO THE PRESS

#### **Be Brief**

The best letters to the press are short and to the point. Don't waffle. A short paragraph making a sharp point is more likely to be included than a long letter. Letter editors could do without the work of shortening letters, and are grateful for short pieces that can fill up small bits of available space.

#### **Type Your Letter**

Many newspapers will just discard handwritten letters. Type all correspondence, then use snail mail or fax, or use e-mail.

#### **Include Your Details**

It is essential to include your personal details with any letter to the press. Usually, newspapers won't include a letter if it isn't accompanied by the sender's details, including address, which must be verifiable. This is usually the case for email submissions too. Check the newspaper's policy, and stick to it. Letter writers can usually request that their details not be published, but these still need to be included.

### **Declare Your Own Credentials**

We live in what eminent sociologist Randall Collins has called a 'credential society'. Credentials count – educational credentials, job titles, and the little letters people include after their names count for more than ability or expertise, which after all we don't have time to prove in a letter. When writing letters to the press, it is essential to present some kind of credential – 'as somebody who has travelled extensively in the Middle East', 'as a student of International Relations at Harvard University', or 'President, Israel Society, University of Amsterdam'. This increases chances of publication, and lends weight to content.

### **Be Informative**

Mention facts that will be interesting to a newspaper's audience, instead of re-treading old ground. It is far better to say something like - 'You mentioned Arafat's speech in Ramallah but neglected to mention that in this very speech he called for *jihad*, or holy way, eight times' than to say 'You mentioned Arafat's speech in Ramallah, but didn't mention that he was a terrorist who has killed Jews'. Don't assume that readers will be knowledgeable – set out background where necessary, so say 'Chairman of the Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat', and not just 'Arafat'.

### **Be Affirmative**

Don't be apologetic when putting a pro-Israel case forward. Instead be assertive and positive in explaining Israel's positions. So, for example, say that 'Israel is a progressive country committed to equality and justice for all her citizens' instead of 'it's not really fair to say that Israel is an Apartheid state'.

### **Appear Rational**

Hysterical or excessively angry language will alienate readers. Write clearly and rationally. It can be difficult to remain rational and maintain a calm tone when media coverage has been terribly biased against Israel and done something like praising terrorist actions; however calm and rational language succeeds in getting readers to take note. So, for example, say 'I was disappointed with your apologetics for Hamas terrorists – there can be no justification for the deliberate targeting of young children', and don't say 'your support of disgusting terrorists shows that you and your paper are nothing but Arab lovers, who don't understand that Hamas, Arafat, and their ilk are just murderers'.

### **Use Inclusive Language**

Try to use language that allows your audience to identify with the pro-Israel cause. For example, instead of saying 'Palestinian terrorism is a danger to stability in the Middle East' use the more inclusive 'we all understand what a danger to Middle East stability Palestinian terrorism is...'

### **When Complaining, Ask for Something to be Done**

Letters should always ask for something to be done in response. If complaining about a particular error in coverage of Israel, ask for either a correction or clarification, and do so explicitly. 'I would be grateful if you would issue a correction of this factual error as soon as possible'. If you are complaining about perceived bias, ask for future coverage to address the points that you have made.

## **LETTERS TO POLITICIANS**

### **REASONS TO WRITE TO POLITICIANS**

Politicians consider each letter they receive to be representative of 100s of voters' feelings on a subject. If a politician receives a handful of letters in support of Israel, they are likely to believe that their voters support Israel. Grassroots pressure won't get a politician to radically alter their views, but it might well give them the confidence to act on their pro-Israel feelings. Thanking a politician after they do something to help Israel will encourage them to continue in the same vein. Conversely, grassroots pressure on politicians who are generally hostile to Israel might persuade them that they will be punished by the electorate if they don't moderate their actions.

### **HOW TO WRITE TO POLITICIANS**

#### **Identify as a Concerned Citizen**

Politicians are quick to discount letters that they see as part of organised campaigns conducted by pressure groups. For this reason, letter writers should identify themselves as concerned citizens, and not as members of organisations.

#### **Write a Personal Letter**

Use neat handwriting, or type your letter but then write in the top (salutation) and bottom (signature) by hand. If adapting a letter from a template, be certain to make enough changes to the letter to make it 'personal'.

#### **Focus Clearly on One Topic**

Many politicians receive a large number of letters. State your position clearly in the first sentence of your letter – 'as a concerned supporter of Israel I believe it is important that we act against

terrorism in the Middle East'. Then, in the rest of your letter, limit discussion to only one topic. Better just to talk about terrorism than to talk about Jerusalem, the United Nations, Antisemitism, and terrorism all in the same letter.

### **Ask for Specific Action**

Politicians want to keep their electors happy, but they need to know what is expected of them. Include details of specific action that politicians should take with each letter. For example, ask a politician to vote in favour of a piece of legislation, or to relay complaints to the foreign ministry.

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### ***The Zionist Idea* Arthur Hertzberg**

An understanding of Israel's current situation is well supplemented by an understanding of Zionism. Arthur Hertzberg's sourcebook is a well-selected collection of original writings and statements on Zionism by the major Zionist thinkers and personalities from before the establishment of the State. *The Zionist Idea* is supplemented by an excellent introductory essay that explains how divisions between Herzl's and Ahad Ha'am's strands of Zionist thought have come to affect the development of Zionism, and subsequently, the Jewish character of the State of Israel.



Resource  
Review

# APPROACHING PUBLIC OFFICIALS

*Most democratic representatives, including student leaders, are accessible to voters and other interested parties. So are corporate representatives. It is possible to write to, and to meet with, most leaders, in most countries.*

Dealing with public officials means, primarily, being polite, making it clear that you are approaching them as an individual, being factual, and being clear about what action they are expected to take.

Follow the general guidelines for approaching officials when approaching them directly.

## **Meeting Elected Officials:**

1. Make an appointment in advance, and make sure that you keep it.
2. Attend the meeting with only one or two people. If more than one person goes, then make sure that a decision is made ahead of time about who is going to be the spokesperson.
3. Dress appropriately and smartly. This is obviously different for meeting students or members of parliament.
4. Find out in advance about the public official, their opinions, and their voting record. This shouldn't be held against them, but should be considered when thinking about how to address them.
5. Compliment the official on their past achievements, and the job that they are doing.
6. Be friendly and positive.
7. Provide a one page background information sheet.
8. Speak as an individual voter ("I think...") and not as a member of a group ("We in the Israel Defence Organisation think...").
9. Learn facts in advance.
10. Be very clear about what you want to say. Make your points briefly and clearly.
11. If the official disagrees, don't get drawn into an argument. Explain your response to their points, always listening to what they have to say first.
12. Thank the official for their time.

# ORGANISING A DEMONSTRATION

## **Decide On Aim for Demonstration**

Every demonstration should be integrated into a wider campaign comprised of events, press activity, and lobbying, and should be designed to achieve clear aims. Demonstrations are potentially powerful ways to mobilise students, create an impression, and change the minds of the public and politicians – but only if they are intended to achieve very clear aims.

The best aims for a demonstration are topical and up-to-date, focus attention on influencing the opinions of people who in some way matter – be they politicians, students, or the Jewish community, and are realistic. A demonstration demanding peace in the Middle East held somewhere in Australia might be aiming to broadly, and is being held a bit too far from those with the power to bring peace to the Middle East. A demonstration in Australia calling for the Government to condemn Palestinian terror and cut off all ties with the Palestinian Authority is more topical, better targeted, and more realistic.

## **Work out an Angle for the Demonstration**

Demonstrations are by their very nature public, and designed to grab attention, particularly of public leaders. The best way to get a point across to a large number of people, and to pressure politicians to act, is through the press. For this reason, demonstrations need to be designed with the press in mind.

In order to get the press 'on side', it is often worthwhile to come up with some sort of 'angle' for a demonstration. Unfortunately, living as we do in a world of thousands of issues competing for their share of saturation news coverage, it is very hard to command the attention of the public. Demonstrations that are in some way 'different' often make the news, and force people to take notice. The thing that makes a demonstration could just be the numbers of people – a big demonstration stands a good chance of making the news. But there are other angles to take - celebrity or two will increase coverage, as would some sort of photo-stunt. Demonstrating outside a place where some sort of important meeting is taking place will often get coverage just because reporters are there already.

## **Set the Desired Time and Place**

Once an angle is decided upon, some of the more concrete details need to be dealt with. Think of when and where to hold the demonstration. This needs to be at a time when student activists will be able to turn up, and in a place that is accessible. The right place to hold a demonstration

should be limited to some degree by the aims and angle – if you want to influence one particular politician, try to demonstrate outside his or her window, if you are running some sort of photo stunt, you will have to find the right backdrop.

If you are arranging a demonstration on campus, make it somewhere highly visible, and hold it at a time where a lot of students will be around, such as lunchtime.

### **Consider Safety and Security**

Safety has to come first. Don't endanger students by organising a demonstration in a place that might be dangerous (unless there are the best reasons in the world for doing so).

### **Get Permission from the Authorities**

In most countries it is necessary to gain a legal permit before holding a demonstration. This must be attempted a long time in advance, to allow time for the authorities to deal with the request, and to ensure that negotiations can be entered into if the authorities don't immediately okay the request. Failure to get permission for a demonstration can lead to an embarrassing forced dispersal, or even arrest.

### **Mobilise Students**

Once the time and place of a demonstration is set, and the authorities have given permission, students need to be mobilised to attend. Hand out leaflets, put up posters, send out email chains, and ask activists on campus to do the same.

One potential problem when it comes to mobilising students to attend a demonstration is the 'free rider' problem – everybody assumes that the demonstration will happen just as well without them, and so they don't bother going. If too many people do this, there won't be a demonstration. The more particular to Jewish students' interests a demonstration is, the more important it is to approach Jewish students individually to get them to attend. If necessary, consider offering 'sweeteners' such as a party afterwards, or free drinks, to those who turn up.

### **Let the Press Know**

Demonstrations are designed to capture the attention of the public. As already mentioned above, press coverage is essential. But press coverage is not guaranteed by a good idea or a clever photo opportunity. Let the press know about the demonstration using a press release. A press release should be sent to the individual journalist with responsibility for covering the issue – find out the name of the relevant person at each newspaper (campus, local, and sometimes even national) and talk to them personally to let them know what you are going to be doing.



If a demonstration is going to be unusual in some way (and it works better if it is), then sell the press on this fact, and let them know what a good story the demonstration will make.

Unfortunately, one can't rely on the press to turn up to cover a demonstration. Sometimes the press will cover an event even if they weren't present – for this reason, make sure that somebody at the event is taking good photographs to send to those papers that don't send their own photographer.

### **Make Materials**

Make sure that plenty of time is set aside to make the materials that will be needed for the demonstration. These include banners, signs, and leaflets to give to the public, and even costumes for a photo-stunt.

When making signs and leaflets, try to print using a computer. When making banners, stick to high-contrast colours such as black on white, yellow on black, or such like. Think of a few good slogans, and try to stick to them, in order to put across a simple and clear message.

### **Follow Up with the Press**

After a demonstration, get in touch with the press to see if they got all the information that they needed. This serves as a reminder about the story. If nobody from the press was present, send a press release with photographs to all of the papers that might give coverage to the demonstration. This has to be done practically immediately – any delay will prevent the story being considered for inclusion.

# MAKING AND DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS

*Leaflets can be a very effective way of communicating ideas, and building public support for a pro-Israel cause. Obviously everybody is capable of making and distributing a leaflet about Israel - writing a few words, sticking on a picture, and leaving a lot of copies lying around. Effective leaflet writing and distribution needs some thought however, and involves following simple guidelines.*

## TYPES OF LEAFLET

Leaflets have a variety of different uses in Israel advocacy. Although communicating with the public using leaflets follows a fairly standard process, there are differences between leaflets depending upon their uses.

### **Advertising An Event**

This should be on one side, and contain the details of the event very clearly. These include what will happen, who is invited, whether there is a cost, and depending upon security considerations, the location or how to find out the location.

### **Fact Sheet**

This should be one or two sides of a standard size page. Should include facts and figures, and even footnoted references. Fact sheets aren't usually for general distribution, but for giving to people who request information, and for sending to officials who might help the campaign. Fact sheets don't need to contain pictures.

### **Campaign Flyer**

Should be folded into half or thirds. Must include photographs, illustrations, and diagrams. The writing for a campaign flyer needs to be particularly clear and easy to read. Even though campaign flyers might target a particular audience (students, Jewish students, or whatever), other people will of course see them, and so they can't say anything too extreme.

## PRODUCING LEAFLETS

### **Define Your Objectives**

Before putting pen to paper, start to think about what a leaflet is intended to achieve.

Defining objectives means listing the various messages one wants to convey, and what these messages are meant to achieve. For example, when trying to prevent an Antisemitic speaker from talking on campus, make sure that leaflets explain why Antisemitism is wrong, why freedom of speech shouldn't extend to Antisemitism on campus, and so on.

When writing a leaflet, keep in mind the intended audience. Students should be addressed in more 'youthful' language than faculty members. Jews should be given different things to read than non-Jews, in some situations. It is often worth writing a few leaflets, and using them to target different groups.

### **Design Process**

- Draft text for a leaflet, bearing in mind whom the audience is, and what the leaflet is intended to achieve.
- Use small blocks of text to facilitate scanning. Write concisely.
- Use heading titles that can get a message across to people who only read the 'big print'.
- Use 'pull-quotes' to break up text and emphasize important messages. This means, place a sentence or two in quotation marks, and set it in bold, out of the flow of the rest of the text.
- Proofread text. Don't rely on computer spell-checking software to catch errors.
- Give a leaflet to somebody who wasn't involved in writing it to check if it conveys the right message. Try doing this with somebody who isn't involved with Jewish or pro-Israel activity.
- Find photographs, maps, and diagrams to insert into a leaflet. Try to make these the highest possible quality. If on a reasonable budget, consider getting screens (also known as half-tones or velox) made of photographs at a professional printer's to greatly improve reproduction quality.
- Type all text and lay it out. Place pictures. Use a photograph with a powerful slogan on the front of a campaign leaflet.
- Use white space (blank space) as a design aid. If possible, get somebody with graphic design experience to help at this stage.
- Make sure that printing or photocopying is done at the highest possible quality. If sending a brochure to a printer, try sending them an Adobe Acrobat file, or other post-script file by e-mail. If photocopying, make sure that at least the master copy was printed on a good laser printer.

## **DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS**

### **Handing Out Leaflets**

Unlikely as it may seem, it is possible to be good (or bad) at this seemingly simple task:

- Dress in an inoffensive way. If dressing unusually, make sure to appear friendly and approachable. Better to dress up as a clown than a skeleton.
- Make eye contact with people who are approaching. Making eye contact is the key to handing-out leaflets. Notice people approaching before they get too close – once people are too near it can be rude to make eye contact.
- Smile at people.
- Hold leaflets so that the title can be clearly seen by passers-by.
- When handing a leaflet to somebody who isn't talking to somebody else, consider a short phrase like "this explains why we're here today".
- Don't get involved in long conversations, as the aim of leafleting is to hand out leaflets. Offer to talk to genuinely interested people later.
- Don't get drawn into arguments. The aim is to convince the middle ground. Remember the basic Israel advocacy principle that those who are deeply opposed to Israel aren't the target of efforts to explain what Israel is about, and are highly unlikely to genuinely listen. Certainly, the street is not the right time to persuade somebody to really change his or her views. If somebody confronts you and tries to argue, say politely "Perhaps if you read this leaflet you might start to change your mind".
- In some areas, it might be sensible to hand out leaflets at least in pairs. Consider the possibility of being attacked.
- Pick up leaflets that people have thrown away before leaving an area. It reflects badly on a cause if it is seen littering the street.

### **Putting up Posters:**

- Ask permission before sticking something up on a student union notice board. This helps things stay up longer.
- Sticking things in public places can be effective, but remember the possibility of being fined.
- Toilet cubicles, hall of residence notice boards, and shops can be effective places for posters.
- Never damage personal property, or stick things in places that somebody is keeping free of posters.

# ISRAEL AND STUDENTS

*Every Jewish student organisation needs to decide for itself how to deal with Israel. Without a doubt the establishment of the State of Israel was one of the most significant events in Jewish history, certainly in the last century. Zionist or not, every student group needs to deal with Israel - even ignoring Israel is a policy decision with real repercussions. When so much of the focus on Israel is negative, it is well worth considering ways to educate Jewish students about the many aspects of Israel.*

Jewish student groups need to find ways in which to include Israel in their programming. There are a range of areas of possible activities, all of which will help create a more positive and rounded approach to Israel amongst Jewish students.

## **Using Hebrew**

One easy way to make sure that Israel is 'included' in Jewish student activities, however symbolically, is through the use of a small number of Hebrew words. This is done by many youth movements who speak of 'madrachim' instead of 'leaders', 'peulot' instead of 'activities' and so on. In Jewish student groups common phrases include 'oneg Shabbat' (Joy of Shabbat - used for Friday night activities), 'va'ad' which means committee, and others. The advantage of using Hebrew words is that it works to reveal a sort of commitment to Israel and Hebrew. The disadvantages are that this reveals a merely symbolic commitment; using Hebrew words can be alienating for those who don't know what they mean; and that without a serious commitment to actually learning Hebrew, a tokenistic use of a few words can undermine serious attempts to learn.

## **Learning Hebrew**

If using a few Hebrew words that nobody understands doesn't appeal, then it is always possible to relate to Hebrew a little more seriously. It is often possible to organise proper Modern Hebrew lessons for students, perhaps using university language instruction facilities, Israeli students, or an Israeli from the local community. Try to set up a beginners class, and perhaps an intermediate level class as well. At higher levels of Hebrew ability it is also possible to set up a 'Hebrew circle' for people to get together and practice their spoken Hebrew, perhaps read articles together (print them from the Israeli newspapers online - [www.ynet.co.il](http://www.ynet.co.il) for Yedioth Achronot, and [www.haaretz.co.il](http://www.haaretz.co.il) for the broadsheet Ha'aretz), or watch Israeli films that might be available

from resource centres or even the Israeli embassy's cultural attaché. The time and effort required to learn Hebrew properly might be too much for many students, but for those who are interested it can be a very rewarding experience. Supplement classes and Hebrew circles with words of the day/week/month on your communications and publications.

### **Israeli Students**

A large number of Israelis, when they finish the army and come to study, just want to 'escape'. They want to escape the claustrophobia that is modern-day Israel, relax, and get a degree whilst they do it. Others, who haven't got in to study law or medicine in Israel, are happy to go abroad to learn their chosen subject. Israeli students are a great natural resource for student groups everywhere. Use Israeli students to run educational events, social events, and even just to come along and reminisce about their homeland at various events. Israeli students often don't get involved in Jewish activities whilst studying abroad - a concerted effort to organise events with them and for them could work to get them active, and provide a healthy injection of 'Israel' to your activities.

### **Israeli News and Current Affairs**

Unfortunately Israel is often in the international news, and students are interested to know what is going on there. Obviously there are disagreements about how to interpret what goes on in Israel, and different students relate to Israel's politics in different ways. What remains constant is that Jewish students need to be kept abreast of what is going on, and need a certain level of understanding of Israeli political history and of Israeli society.

Not every Jewish student will want to be involved in Israel advocacy, but this doesn't mean that they won't want to learn about Israel. Publicise details of where to find up-to-date Israeli news. Write your own run-down of the week's news from Israel. Organise speakers to explain news in more depth, so that students understand things a bit better. Do things to remember victims of war and terror in Israel (and amongst Palestinians), such as mentioning them in prayers, announcements, and writing about them in newsletters.

### **Education About Israel**

Thankfully not everything in Israel and about Israel is connected to war, possible war, and impending disaster. There are a whole host of topics that are interesting, and that students might be interested in. All the usual methods of education - speakers, discussions, articles, classes, trips, games, educational parties etc. - can be used to educate about Israel. Try to focus on

topics that have applicability to the lives of students in the Diaspora, such as religious-secular relations, aliyah, relating to the poor and disadvantaged, and so on.

### **Charity Work**

There are literally hundreds of good causes in Israel that could benefit from help. Organisations such as the New Israel Fund are able to put student groups in touch with charities worthy of support and can be found via their website [www.nif.org](http://www.nif.org). Raising money for charity can be quite easy, and a great way of bringing people together. Involve as many people as possible in selecting the charity, and make sure that this charity isn't going to alienate members. Then, get organised, and get raising money.

Use charity work as an opportunity for education. Use discussions about whom to support to give educational input, invite speakers to provide briefings about the issues that you are raising money for, and distribute interesting articles from the Israeli press.

### **Yom HaZikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut**

Two days in the Jewish calendar make a lot more sense inside of Israel than outside of Israel. Both however, are important, and can be useful opportunities for Jewish student groups to incorporate Israel in their activities. Yom HaZikaron is officially called Remembrance Day for Soldiers of the Israeli Defence Forces, and is the day on which Israel remembers those who died defending the state (or, unfortunately, in things like terror attacks and training accidents). The day after Yom HaZikaron is Yom Ha'atzmaut, or Independence Day. Try to organise a memorial ceremony for Yom HaZikaron and then the next evening organise a party. Or, if that is too much to do, organise a memorial ceremony at the end of Yom HaZikaron that is then followed by a party at the start of Yom Ha'atzmaut (which is possible because according to Jewish tradition, the day starts in the evening). Involve Israelis, especially in the Yom HaZikaron ceremony - perhaps in relating their personal stories or talking about the impact of the day 'back home'. The Yom Ha'atzmaut party can be the traditional 'falafel and hummous party, but it could also be a huge club night with a 'wear blue and white' theme, or a 'make the desert bloom' theme, or whatever theme you want.

### **Educational Trips to Israel**

Israel is warm, sunny, interesting, and well worth a visit. Money is often available to subsidise travel to Israel, and for those who can get their hands on money from organisations such as Birthright or the Jewish Agency, it may be possible to organise an educational trip to Israel. Get in touch with organisations who can provide support to see what is possible, conduct market

research to see if it is wanted, and if there seems to be enough interest spend a lot of time organising something that, although a big undertaking, is very worthwhile.

### **Promoting Aliyah**

Although aliyah isn't even on the minds of most Jewish students, there is still a market for activities that explain to students what going to live in Israel is like. Hook interested students up with aliyah pilot tours run by the Jewish Agency. Consider organising speakers who can talk about careers in Israel, or about what going to live in Israel is like. Find people to write articles about their experiences of aliyah, and of life in the Middle East. If there are a few students interested in aliyah, consider organising some sort of support group for them, so that they go through things together.

### **Campaign for Soldiers Missing in Action**

Israel has a number of soldiers who are missing in action, some who have been missing for around twenty years, others for less. There is an active campaign working to create international pressure in order to help secure their release, or at least to obtain some sort of information about their fates. Getting involved in the MIA campaign could allow students to do something useful for Israel, in a way that isn't necessarily very demanding.

### **Shlichim, the Jewish Agency, Israeli Organisations**

There are a number of organisations that deal with Israel education, and that are happy to provide help to student groups. Jewish Agency emissaries, Jewish Agency educational staff, staff at Israeli consulates and embassies, and Israeli organisations everywhere are often happy to provide speakers, educational resources, and even money for Israel related activities. Be sure to be in touch with the wide range of Israeli organisations whose job it is to help.



# SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR ISRAEL ACTIVISTS

*Israel activists need to acquire knowledge and skills in order to contribute fully to the pro-Israel cause. It is important that activists take care to develop their own capacities, and not just spend their time working directly on campaigns, in order to maximise their effectiveness and impact in the long-term.*

## **Create a Personal Vision**

The first step in personal change is to create a personal vision, an idea of how good you could be. A personal vision creates constructive tension between current imperfect reality, and the ideal future.

To create a personal vision, think long and hard about what contributions you would really like to make in the field of Jewish student activism. What unique achievements would you like to make, and what skills and knowledge would you need in order to make them? Dream about how good you could be, if only you had the time and energy. Then write down this vision; write down a description of the Jewish activist you want to become.

A personal vision should be the first step in creating an action plan of learning, training, and improving, which takes the Jewish activist to where they want to go.

## **Acquire Knowledge**

The situation in Israel is complex, multi-faceted, and changing on a daily basis. For this reason it is important to keep learning about it. Read a variety of newspapers and watch news programmes on television to find out not just what happened, but also how it is being portrayed. Keep in touch with the Israeli press every day on the Internet to get coverage in depth.

Students are fortunate in that they usually have free access to courses and lectures about the Middle East. Attend classes in Middle East politics, Israel, or even Modern Hebrew for fun or for credit. If you get time, read books about the situation in Israel – there are a number of great books that give an in depth coverage of the key issues, and give a depth of understanding that the news, due to its reliance on events instead of processes, never could.

## **Develop Skills**

Israel activists need to be able to put their knowledge to use, and this involves mastery of skills. To acquire skills it is necessary to understand exactly what is involved in mastery, and then to practice again and again. The best ways to pick up a skill are through training, observing experts, and through having somebody show you how to do it. Better yet, combine all three.

Training is usually available in a whole host of skills connected to Israel advocacy, and not only from Jewish sources. Training in public speaking, campaigning, or even lobbying might be available at university, from women's groups, from political groups, or even as commercial services offered to job seekers. Jewish organisations often offer training in key advocacy skills. Where no suitable training is available, it is sometimes possible to find a trainer, and arrange for them to come to campus.

Experts are everywhere. Model certain skills by copying the way star performers do what they do. For example, watch Bill Clinton give a speech, note down some of the things that he does, and then try to copy him. Watch Clinton use his hand to gesture, or watch him point with his thumb. British Prime Minister Tony Blair points with the back of his hand – try that gesture on for size, see how it feels. Modelling skills on the way proven experts do things is almost guaranteed to bring results.

However gifted, every Jewish activist is able to improve. But, for some reason, most of us are incapable of seeing how we can improve certain skills, even when this might be obvious to others. Ask for feedback, and seek out an experienced activist to act as mentor.

## **Practice Skills**

Once a skill has been learnt, it needs to be developed. This is done through practice. Obviously getting out 'in the field' and campaigning for Israel is great practice, but there are ways to practice in 'lower risk' situations. Read the news carefully and attempt to detect as many examples of bias as possible. Record Israeli politicians on TV and analyse their performance. Then re-write what they said to see if you could do better. Gather a group of fellow activists together and practice scenarios together. Speak at debates that have nothing to do with Israel, just to get a feel for talking in public. The main point about practice is that it ought to offer an opportunity to actually use a skill, and to reflect on how it was used afterwards.

## Connect With Others

There is an entire network of Jewish student activists out there, all attempting to help Israel's image in the International arena. By getting in touch with other Jewish student activists, a Jewish student can give and receive ideas, support, and encouragement. There are a few e-mail lists, forums, and such like that allow Jewish student activists to keep abreast of latest developments, share resources, and feel part of an informal network that can really make a difference to Israel's standing in the international arena.

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### ***Israel: A History – Martin Gilbert***

Published in 1998 this book covers the period from 1884 – 1997. It is a detailed account of Israel's history written by a renowned historian, but aimed at the average reader. One doesn't need to be an academic to enjoy Gilbert's history. The book contains plenty of anecdotes and interesting side stories, as well as detailed accounts of important events, and some analysis. Gilbert's own perspective in the book is left-leaning. He particularly supports Peres who receives a very sympathetic portrayal in the book. Despite this, Gilbert achieves a credible level of balance throughout. The book is structured chronologically and the year is included in the header on each page. This makes it easy to find what one is looking for or to browse. *Israel: A History* is probably one of the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and detailed histories of Israel available.



Resource  
Review

# TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ISRAEL ACTIVISTS

*Effectively explaining the situation in Israel to a wide variety of audiences and in a number of different forums - some of them quite hostile - is a hard earned skill. Every Jewish student is capable of defending Israel in some way, but to be really effective certain skills must be practiced and learnt. Politicians engage voice coaches and image consultants, and practice hand gestures for hours before they stand a chance of election. Jewish activists, although not to the same extent, also need advice and training.*

Imagine an eager Jewish activist who phones in to a local talk radio station to reply to a Palestinian caller. He knows his material well - he's read widely about the Middle East, and reads Israeli newspapers over the Internet. He's even familiar with material about speaking in public, and with how to frame a debate and how to point score. He calls up, and gets on air. The host welcomes him; he introduces himself, and starts to launch into his point. In his mind he can hear what he has to say, yet his mouth is dry, and gets stuck on the words. His nerves get the better of him; sweaty palms cause him to panic. The audience can just hear "it's like, you know", again and again. The host cuts him off, thanks him, and mocks him by saying that to the audience that they've just heard "the coherent Israeli position".

Training is necessary to build confidence and turn difficult skills into activities that can be performed as a matter of routine. Imagine trying to drive down a busy road without ever having driven before. Imagine trying to juggle in public just on the strength of reading about doing it. Explaining what is happening in Israel in front of difficult audiences is no different - it needs to be practiced before it can be done well.

The best way to ensure that Israel activists within a student group have the skills and knowledge that they will need to effectively promote Israel is to organise training, and introduce other systems, on an organisational level. Taking an organisation-wide approach to development helps to make sure that individuals all improve their abilities – leaving this to individuals is less reliable.

## **Training**

Training should be arranged for those who are involved, and also for those who are willing to become involved. Issues in training design include who to invite, whether to automatically allow

everybody attending to take on responsibilities afterwards, and whether those being trained will have to give some commitment to stay involved before benefiting from the training.

Skills are best practiced by using role play. Role play is best done by creating a simulated environment - a learning laboratory - to allow activists to try speaking in public, answering difficult questions, or attempting to undermine hostile speakers. A learning laboratory must be a safe environment within which to practice new skills - making mistakes and trying out new ways of doing things in a learning laboratory ought to be encouraged, as mistakes help real long-term learning.

The best way to use role play in a learning laboratory typically involves a standard process:

1. Present a skill, discussing the basic points to remember.
2. Ask for volunteers to practice using the skill, giving them roles to play in a certain scenario and a small amount of time to prepare.
3. Let the volunteers perform in front of a group, who must watch carefully.
4. Ask the volunteers how they thought they did.
5. Ask the audience for additional feedback.
6. Sum up some of the points that arose from the demonstration.
7. Allow others to repeat the same process.

Scenarios can be things such as 'answering questions after a speech to a Christian Zionists group', 'phoning in to a radio show', 'complaining to a professor about anti-Israel bias', or even 'avoiding confrontation with a militant Islamic student at lunch'. The main point of 'learning laboratories' is to create an opportunity to practice all necessary skills before using them 'out in the real world'.

### **Modelling**

Make a habit of learning from the best. Israel activists should watch top politicians to see how they communicate - watch their hands, listen to their voice, and hear what they say. Current affairs interviews can demonstrate how to avoid questions, how to reframe the debate, and how to point score. It is worth making notes on some of the more impressive habits of top communicators to see what they do and how they do it.

To ensure that Israel activists are aware of the benefits of modelling, it is worth bringing specific leaders to their attention, highlighting what they do well. Consider organising showings of current affairs programmes for those involved in promoting Israel.

## **Mentoring**

More experienced Jewish activists are often able to give good advice and constructive feedback to those with less experience. It is well worth attempting to utilise experience by setting up mentoring schemes. Allow those who are new to Jewish activism and being in the public arena to work closely with others, who can give them feedback on their performances, provide a listening ear to deal with nerves and other issues, and to suggest a way of learning and developing skills.

# **ISRAEL: ACCUSATIONS AND REBUTTALS**





# THE COLLAPSE OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND THE ROAD BACK TO PEACE

- In July 2000 the Palestinians and the Israelis met at Camp David in the USA to try and hammer out an "end of conflict" deal. This would have been the final stage of the Oslo Peace Process begun in 1993.
- The parties left Camp David without a deal having been agreed.
- On September 29, Rosh Hashanah, demonstrations and rioting broke out among the Palestinians. This persisted and escalated into the intafada (uprising). A period of violence from both sides has resulted.
- Peace talks were broken off with the start of the violence. There have been numerous attempts to restart the talks but so far without success. Two key attempts, sponsored by the Americans were the Tenet Agreement and the Mitchell accords.



**Accusation:** The Intafada began because the Palestinians were frustrated at their lack of progress at the Peace talks and Israel's refusal to end the Occupation.

**Rebuttal:** At Camp David Israel's then Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians more than anyone had offered them before. The offer included a Palestinian state and control over much of East Jerusalem including the Old City (minus the Jewish quarter - with the Temple Mount to be discussed). The Americans at the talks expressed surprise at the extent of the offer that Barak put on the table. Arafat and his negotiators rejected the offer. They did not put any alternative offers on the table. Since the talks broke down Arafat has blamed everyone else but himself. He blamed the Americans and the Israelis but the reality is that Arafat chose to reject Barak's unprecedented offer and not to even present any alternatives. Arafat then chose to ride the wave of extremist violence. This violence has not merely ended the talks but has destroyed the trust built up between Israelis and Palestinians.

**Accusation:** The trigger to the Intifada was when Israel displayed its colonial tendencies as Ariel Sharon (then leader of the opposition) went up to the Temple Mount.

**Rebuttal:** Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount was merely an excuse and not the reason for the start of the violence. Incitement had been going on for a long time before Sharon's visit and sporadic violence had also occurred. The major demonstrations did not break out until a full day after the visit. The Mitchell report stated categorically "The Sharon visit did not cause the Intafada." Indeed the Palestinians themselves have made clear that the violence had been planned long before Sharon's visit.

The violence that started in September 2000 occurred for two major reasons:

First, the Palestinian Authority leadership made a strategic choice to pursue violence. It was deliberately initiated and cultivated by the leadership. Official organs of the leadership were

involved in the violence. Weapons supplied by the PA under the terms of the Oslo Accords have been used against Israelis. According to the Palestinian media, Imad Al-Falouji, the PA's Communications Minister confirmed that Chairman Arafat authorised preparations for the Intafada immediately after the end of the Camp David talks. He added that the Intafada was not started because of Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount.

Second, throughout the 7 years since the signing of the Oslo Peace accord incitement and anti-Israel propaganda had not ceased. The Palestinian people were not being prepared for peace with the Israelis or for the concessions that they would have to make. Schoolbooks and television continued to paint a picture of Israelis as the enemy. Both before and since the outbreak of violence the Palestinian media has incited violence against Israel and Israelis.



### Diverse Opinions

Some people in Israel believe that another trigger was Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. The Palestinians had seen Israel withdraw from Lebanon under fire from the terrorist group Hizbollah. It is possible that extremist elements reasoned that they could achieve more from violence than they were getting offered in negotiations.

**Accusation:** The Israelis rejected peace in February 2001 by electing right winger Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister by a massive majority. Sharon, an uncompromising figure with accusations of war crimes hanging over him from the Lebanon War is disinclined to make peace.

**Rebuttal:** Ariel Sharon was elected after 5 months of Palestinian violence. This was an expression of Israeli disillusionment with the Peace Process and its handling by Ehud Barak. The Sharon Government is not against peace. It is also not an extremist government. Sharon is from the centre-right Likud party. His government is one of National Unity with members from the centre-left Labour party, among others. The Government's foreign minister is Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shimon Peres. The Government has consistently tried to reach agreement with the Palestinian Authority. They accepted the Mitchell report and the Tenet agreement.

In public opinion surveys, over and over again, the Israeli public have expressed their desire for a peace agreement with the Palestinians: despite the ongoing violence, this has not wavered. The only thing that has reduced is Israeli trust in Arafat and faith in the achievability of peace. The Israeli desire for peace remains constant. In a JMCC poll in December 2000, 64% of people supported negotiations. This was a rise of 10% from the previous year. 62% of voters, voted for Sharon in the elections. This demonstrates that the majority of Israelis see no contradiction between Sharon and peace.

**Accusation:** Israelis don't want peace. They ignore the ceasefire and send the army into areas of the Territory meant to be under PA control.

**Rebuttal:** On May 22nd 2001 Sharon declared a unilateral cease-fire in an attempt to restore the peace process and calm violence. For ten days Israeli forces observed the ceasefire despite over 70 attacks from Palestinians. On June 1st the Dolphinarium disco in Tel Aviv was attacked by a suicide-bomber. 20 people were killed. Almost all of them were teenagers. Israel is committed to ending violence and establishing peace but it has a commitment to the security of its citizens. Many people are sympathetic to Israel when it is a victim of terror, yet fail to see that Israel needs to take steps to defend herself. No Government in the world could allow itself to be repeatedly attacked without reacting.

Israel is forced to send the army into areas under Palestinian control in order to defend Israeli citizens and capture terrorists whom the PA refuses to arrest. For example, Israel has sent soldiers into Beit Jala in order to stop continued shooting at the residents of the Jerusalem suburb of Gilo.

### What's in a Word?

'Occupation' vs. 'administration' vs. 'conquered from Jordan' vs. 'Palestinian administrative autonomy'.

'Intifada' vs. 'wave of violence' vs. 'strategy of violence'.



### Practical Pointers

- With Jewish students, run a Camp David simulation activity.
- Hold a demonstration or vigil for peace, calling on the Palestinians to return to negotiations.
- Invite a political analyst or Middle East expert to speak at university.
- Organise letter writing to national politicians, calling on them to pressure Yasser Arafat to renounce violence.



### Glossary

**Intafada** - Palestinian uprising.

**Oslo Accords** - The original peace agreement, the first stage of which was signed between the Israelis and the Palestinians in Washington in September 1993. The deal had been worked out in secret in Norway. The peace agreement was to take part in three stages. The second stage was signed in September 1995. These two stages involved the transfer of power in certain parts of the Territories over to the Palestinian Authority. A further agreement was signed at Wye in October 1998. The final stage was to have determined the final status and deal with outstanding matters such as statehood, Jerusalem and the refugees.

**Mitchell Report** - Senator Mitchell visited the Middle East to investigate the causes of the "Al Aqsa Intafada". His conclusions were contained in the Mitchell Report.

**Tenet Agreement** - George Tenet (director of the CIA) came to try and broker a ceasefire. The result "The Tenet Agreement" was an agreed plan for a ceasefire.



## CAMP DAVID 2000



- On 11th July 2000 the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators met at Camp David under the auspices of Bill Clinton to try and hammer out the details of the final status agreement.
- The conference broke up after two weeks with no agreement.
- All kinds of stories have circulated since then as to what occurred.

**Accusation:** The Camp David talks broke down because Prime Minister Barak was not prepared to make enough concessions.

**Rebuttal:** At the press conference in which he admitted that the talks had ended in failure President Clinton said of Barak that he "showed particular courage and vision and an understanding of the historical importance of the moment."

Barak's offer to the Palestinians was the most substantial and far reaching that had ever been made. In Israel, people were stunned by the extent of the concessions that he was prepared to make. It is unclear whether the Israeli public were prepared to support Barak's deal. However they were never given the opportunity to endorse the proposals as Arafat rejected them out of hand. According to media reports Barak's offer included:

- Israeli redeployment from 95% of the West Bank and 100% of the Gaza Strip
- The creation of a Palestinian state in that area
- The removal of isolated settlements that would be transferred to Palestinian control
- Slices of Israeli land to be included in the Palestinian state to compensate for the percentage of the West Bank to become Israeli
- Palestinian control over parts of Jerusalem including most of the Old City
- "Religious Sovereignty" over the Temple Mount (rather than Israeli sovereignty, which had been in effect since 1967)

In return Arafat had to declare the "end of conflict" and agree that no further claims on Israel could be made in the future. Arafat refused the offer. According to reports from those present the Palestinian leadership was not prepared to modify its demands. They clung to old all-or-nothing positions, refusing to compromise on Jerusalem or the issue of Palestinian refugees. Arafat failed to offer counter-proposals, or to specify what particular problems he felt needed to be addressed. Following the failure of the negotiations Barak announced:

"Today I return from Camp David, and can look into the millions of eyes and say with regret: We have not yet succeeded. We did not succeed because we did not find a partner prepared to make decisions on all issues. We did not succeed because our Palestinian neighbours have not yet internalised the fact that in order to achieve peace, each side has to give up some of their dreams; to give, not only to demand."

Since Camp David the Palestinian leadership has attempted to lay the blame at everyone's door but their own. They accused the Americans of not being well-enough prepared for the talks. They claimed that Barak caused their failure due to his all or nothing approach, and his insistence on an end of conflict agreement. However, what Camp David really showed was that the Palestinians were not ready for peace. The people had not been prepared for the fact that they might have to make serious compromises for peace. The Palestinian leadership expected to be able to force Israel to make massive concessions without making any of its own. Soon after the negotiations, Palestinian violence broke out. Negotiations have occurred sporadically but since they have taken place in the shadow of violence they have not been successful. It will take a long time to rebuild the trust that has been lost.

### Diverse Opinions

Some people in Israel believe that Ehud Barak approached the Camp David talks without adequate preparation. They believe that he failed to fully understand the Palestinian position, including the extent to which a long, drawn-out process of negotiation was important to Arafat. There are also those who point out that, whilst generous, the offer Barak made at Camp David was still not of fully contiguous land. Notwithstanding these remarks however, the Palestinian leadership still had the option of attempting to negotiate, or of making counter-offers, and instead they chose to turn to incitement, violence, and terrorism.



### What's in a Word?

'Palestinian state' vs. 'Palestinian Authority' vs. 'Palestinian entity' vs. 'the Palestinians'



### Practical Pointers

- Run a poster campaign, asking Arafat why he said "no".
- Invite political experts to discuss what happened at Camp David.
- Run a poster campaign with the slogan 'Yasser Arafat, never misses an opportunity to miss an opportunity'.
- Run a poster campaign explaining that a two-state solution and the Palestinian right of return are incompatible.
- With Jewish students, run a Camp David simulation activity.



# TERRORISM



- Terrorism is the deliberate and systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent in order to inspire fear for political purposes.
- Even after the Declaration of Principles was signed between Israel and the PLO in 1993, Israel did not cease being a target for terrorism. Sporadic attacks continued, and in 1996 a spate of suicide bombings killed 59 people in 10 days.
- Since the Peace Process broke down in September 2000, terrorism against Israeli civilians has increased.
- Terrorism doesn't only occur inside the Territories, in the form of shootings at cars on the roads for example. There have been several devastating attacks against civilians inside the Green Line, in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Netanya and Jerusalem among other places. Palestinian terrorists seem to particularly target young people, such as in the bombing of down town Jerusalem on a Saturday night (December 1st 2001, 11 people killed all under 21) or a Tel Aviv disco where 21 teenagers were killed (June 1st 2001). They attack people on their way to and from work, such as the bus bombing in Haifa (December 2nd 2001, 15 people killed) and people at leisure just eating out e.g. the bombing of the Sbarro restaurant in Jerusalem (August 9th 2001, 15 people killed, 7 were children). These are just a few of the attacks. They continue weekly, the number of casualties rising all the time.

**Accusation:** The Palestinian use of terror is understandable and legitimate as it is their only weapon against the oppression of Israeli Occupation.

**Rebuttal:** There can never be any justification for the deliberate murder and threatening of innocent civilians to exact political concessions. The only effective way to combat terrorism on an international scale is to view all terrorists equally and not to differentiate between good and bad terrorists. The biggest success terrorists have had in the twentieth century has been getting people to accept the idea that "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter".

There is always an alternative to terrorism. The greatest leaders of last century, who fought for their people against oppression, rejected terrorism and attacks on civilians. Martin Luther King, Ghandi and Nelson Mandela all achieved their aims through other methods. There is never an excuse for terrorism.

For the Palestinians there is even less justification as they chose a path of terror whilst in the middle of a peaceful process that was reaping results. When the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles in 1993 they rejected terrorism. The basis of the Peace Process is that disputes should be resolved through negotiations.

Palestinian terrorism is counterproductive. Rather than bringing more concessions it makes Israelis less inclined to trust Palestinians. The Palestinian's use of violence has caused the peace process to collapse. Before the so called Al-Aqsa Intafada started, the Palestinians were poised to

receive almost all that they wanted, including a state, and control over considerable parts of Jerusalem. The Palestinian leadership rejected this offer and chose terrorism rather than further talks.

Far from the use of terror being the Palestinians' only effective tool to use with Israel, negotiations and the Peace Process are.

**Accusation:** Terrorist attacks on America, such as on September 11th are because of America's support for Israel.

**Rebuttal:** Following the attacks on America in September 2001, many people sought to find links between these attacks and the Israeli-Palestinian situation. It was suggested that if America didn't support Israel it would not be a target for terrorism. Nothing could be further from the truth. The militant Islamic groups responsible for the attacks on the USA see America as their primary enemy. They dub it "The Great Satan". Israel is known as "The Little Satan". Israel is targeted because it is a representative of America in the Middle East, not the other way around.

Hamas, Hizbollah, Islamic Jihad and Al Qaeda are Islamic extremist and rejectionist groups. They are not interested in finding a solution to the Palestinian problem. They see themselves as engaged in an ideological battle to the end, Islam against the West! If you doubt this you can just look at what they say. They all have their own websites, which make their aims very clear.

Bin Laden is happy to use the Palestinians as justification but this is merely a smokescreen. Their cause is added to his list as an after thought. Even the Palestinian leadership has been emphatic about disassociating itself with Al-Qaeda. The only link between the terrorist attacks on America and Israel is that both countries are victims of the same terrorism.

**Accusation:** Palestinians live under Israeli Occupation.

**Rebuttal:** Since "Israeli occupation" is frequently used to legitimate terrorism it is worth noting that as a result of the implementation of the Oslo Peace Agreements approximately 97-98% of Palestinians living in the West Bank or Gaza Strip live under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. By area, over 85% of Gaza and 39.7% of the West Bank are under Arafat's control.

There are restrictions, particularly on Palestinian movements between the different areas under their control. These restrictions have increased as Israel's security is increasingly threatened. Nonetheless, at Camp David Barak offered to end all Occupation allowing the establishment of a Palestinian state on 100% of the Gaza strip and 95% of the West Bank as well as a patch of land, currently part of Israel, to compensate for the missing 5%. Arafat rejected the offer. He

gave up his best chance to end occupation and instead allowed the Palestinians to turn to violence.

**Accusation:** Arafat and the Palestinian Authority have tried their best to contain the violence.

**Rebuttal:** Following many terrorist attacks on Israel Arafat issues a condemnation, but his actions don't match his words. Under international pressure Arafat has on occasion arrested the leaders of the terrorist groups but each time he has released them a few weeks later when the pressure eases. In May 2001, for example, Arafat release over a dozen Islamic militants who had been imprisoned since the suicide bombings in 1996.

Much of the violence has even been orchestrated and implemented by groups associated with the Palestinian Authority leadership such as the Fatah affiliated Tanzim militias and Arafat's own Force 17 security force. On only one occasion did Arafat issue a clear directive for a ceasefire. There is no evidence that the PA have made a sustained and serious effort to end the violence. Rather, the PA is filled with illegal weapons, in defiance of the Oslo agreements, which had clear limits on the number of weapons permitted.

**Accusation:** Israel itself is a terrorist force because of its assassinations of Palestinian leaders.

**Rebuttal:** Israel would prefer the PA to take decisive action against the leaders of the terrorist groups. Failing that, Israel would like to be able to enter the PA controlled areas and arrest those who attack her. However neither of these options are always available. Therefore, regrettably Israel has been forced to resort to assassinations of terrorists engaged in the planning, organisation and execution of attacks on Israeli civilians. This is no different to the American attempts to reach Osama Bin Laden. When the country in which he resides won't arrest him or extradite him then there are few remaining options. American Vice President Dick Cheney supports this view:

"If you've got an organisation that has plotted or is plotting some kind of suicide bomber attack, for example and [the Israelis] have hard evidence of who it is and where they are located, I think there is some justification in them trying to protect themselves by pre-empting." (Fox News Aug. 3rd 2001)

The best explanation of Israel's policy in this comes from the Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Moshe Ya'alon.



"There are no executions without a trial. There is no avenging someone who carried out an attack a month ago. We are acting against those who are waging terror against us. We prefer to arrest them and have detained over 1000. But if we can't and the Palestinians won't, then we have no other choice but to defend ourselves." (Jerusalem Post Aug. 10 2001)

There is a significant difference between terrorism and the reaction to it.

### **Diverse Opinions**

Some people in Israel believe that the policy of assassinating terrorists is misguided. The primary objection to this policy is that it escalates an already bad situation. Assassinations lead to reprisals: operations that might make sense in strictly military terms don't help the political situation. Whilst the wisdom of the assassination policy is sometimes questioned, it is generally acknowledged that targeting active terrorists is a strategy rightly available to Israel in order to defend innocent civilians.



**Accusation:** Israel uses excessive force against people, often children, who are merely throwing stones.

**Rebuttal:** Israel is constantly being accused of a disproportionate reaction. The question of proportionality is somewhat absurd. A proportional response to a bus bombing would be for Israel to place a bomb on a Palestinian bus. This is obviously unacceptable. Israel's responses are designed to neutralise specific threats and, unlike suicide bombings, they are targeted at perpetrators not civilians. It is equally absurd to suggest that Israel must be wrong because more Palestinians have died than Israelis: as if it were a competition and were more Israelis to be killed Israel would become the good guys.

That is not to say that civilians never die. Regrettably innocents, including children, are occasionally caught in the crossfire. Although the suffering of every child is tragic and regretful, a basic difference exists between the two sides. Most Palestinian children have been hurt due to their direct participation in violent confrontations, and a minority of the casualties were the unfortunate result of crossfire or return fire directed towards terrorist targets. By contrast, Israeli child victims were the deliberate choice of their terrorist attackers - the intended and preferred target of the Palestinian bombers, snipers and gunmen. Palestinian children and teenagers have been active in the violence against Israel. Schools are closed to allow their participation in demonstrations and riots. Training camps exist to prepare them, and incitement is constant even on children's programmes on Palestinian TV.

Protestors do not throw small pebbles as is suggested by the tone of the media but rather large rocks capable of serious harm. Neither are the demonstrators unarmed. Most times, in addition to

rocks, protestors have thrown Molotov cocktails and used pistols, machine guns, assault rifles and grenades. Israeli troops under attack have had little choice but to react with rubber bullets and sometimes live fire. Israel's use of force is reactive, designed to defend herself against armed and violent opponents.



### What's in a Word?

'Demonstration' vs. 'riot' vs. 'attack'.

'Stone throwing' vs. 'rock throwing'.

'Terrorist' vs. 'freedom fighter' vs. 'militant' vs. 'suspected terrorist' vs. 'activist'.



### Practical Pointers

- ▶ Hold a vigil for the victims of terror.
- ▶ Fundraise for victims of terror, or Magen David Adom.
- ▶ Run a solidarity trip to Israel.
- ▶ Screen a video, or run a poster campaign, featuring Palestinian children with guns.
- ▶ Send e-mails with biographies of terror victims, to illustrate the human cost of the tragedy.
- ▶ Lobby politicians to include Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizbollah, and their ilk on lists of terror organisations.
- ▶ Lobby politicians to pressure Iran to stop sponsoring terrorism.



### Glossary

**Hamas, Islamic Jihad** - Two of the main terrorist groups that are based in the West Bank and Gaza strip. They are responsible for many of the suicide bombers.

**Territories** - This is used to refer to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These areas are referred to as the "occupied territories" the "liberated territories" the "administrated territories" and "Judea and Samaria". All of the terms are reflective of the ideology of the person using it. Language is very important in this conflict. The terms "territories" or Gaza and West Bank will be used throughout this document as the most neutral terms possible.

**PLO** - The PLO was the main Palestinian terrorist group in the 70s and 80s. In 1993 it abandoned terrorism and signed the Declaration of Principles with Israel. After this it became the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the official representative of the Palestinian people.

**Fatah** - The main faction of the PLO from which Arafat came.

## PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP

- Chairman Arafat is the leader of the Palestinian Authority. As such he is responsible for maintaining law and order and compliance with treaties such as the Oslo Accords.
- In December 2001, frustrated at Arafat's apparent unwillingness to calm the situation, the Israeli Government imposed restrictions on his movements, confining him to his base in Ramallah. They have also refused him permission to travel abroad (for which he needs to travel through Israeli controlled territory) in order to force him to concentrate on the problems at home and bringing the killers of Israeli cabinet minister Rehavam Zeevi to justice.



**Accusation:** The Israeli Army is undermining Arafat's ability to act and makes it impossible for him to be an effective leader for his people.

**Rebuttal:** Arafat and the Palestinian Authority were in trouble long before the Israeli Army confined Arafat to his compound in Ramallah. The Palestinian Authority has never been a particularly effective government for the Palestinian people, even before the current 'Intafada' began.

When the Peace Process was started, a large amount of money and investment from around the world flowed to the Palestinians. The USA and the European Union in particular gave the PA a lot of money to build their infrastructure. Much of this money was never spent on the purpose for which it was intended, a fact that has caused much suffering for the Palestinian people. Even before the break down of the Peace Process, reports were published on the subject of PA corruption by, amongst others, the Palestinian Audit Bureau and the Palestinian Legislative Council.

In March 2001 Palestinian Legislative Council member Hussam Khadr published a paper in which he said that he knew of people who were

"...Dealing with the millions that they robbed from the money of the People... They have taken concessions, brokerage fees and easy profits for themselves, at the expense of our People and our national economic independence. How many billions of dollars are sitting in these people's bank accounts?"

He accused the leadership of persistent corruption and criticized the legislative council for failing to create "a respectable regime that would be different from the various regimes that do not recognize human rights in our society."

Arafat does not need Israel to stop him from being an effective leader. He has been able to do this all on his own. It is often said that Arafat "never misses an opportunity to miss an opportunity". This has been demonstrated by his rejection of statehood at Camp David, his failure to invest in Palestinian infrastructure, and his reluctance to promote peace to the Palestinian people.



### **Diverse Opinions**

There are those in Israel who do believe that restricting the movements of Arafat is counterproductive and has exacerbated the situation. However even if Arafat was able to conduct his business unhindered by the Israelis there is no evidence that he would act decisively to combat the violence. Indeed, all experience suggests that this is unlikely.

**Accusation:** Those carrying out terrorist atrocities against Israel have nothing to do with Arafat or the official leadership of the PA. Arafat cannot be expected to control grass roots violence.

**Rebuttal:** Unfortunately, the Palestinian leadership is heavily involved in violence, and does little to control violence when it can do so. Arafat has been very willing to exploit violence for his own advantage wherever possible, regardless of the implications for peace, and the number of Palestinians who are placed in life-threatening situations.

Much of the Palestinian violence against Israel has even been orchestrated and implemented by groups associated with the Palestinian Authority leadership such as the Fatah-affiliated Tanzim militias and Arafat's own Force 17 security force. On only one occasion did Arafat issue a clear directive to his organisations calling for a ceasefire. There is no evidence that the PA have made a sustained and serious effort to end the violence. Rather, the PA is stockpiling illegal weapons, in defiance of the Oslo agreements, which specify clear conditions on the number of weapons permitted, in preparation for an escalation of violence.

Further evidence of the Palestinian Authority leadership's involvement in the current violence came on January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002 when the Israeli Navy seized the Karina A ship attempting to smuggle more than 50 tonnes of weapons to the PA. Colin Powell, the US Secretary of State was clear about who was behind this operation. In a press conference he said of the ship:

"The information we are receiving and developing on our own makes it clear that there are linkages to the Palestinian Authority."

In connecting the Palestinian leadership to violence one can point to propaganda in the official media and in school books. The PA controls the content of school textbooks. For the first eight years after the initial Oslo Agreement the textbooks used in schools were old Jordanian and

Egyptian ones. However from 2000 the PA started to introduce their own textbooks. The Antisemitism and Anti-Israel rhetoric of the old books has not been replaced. The books do not prepare Palestinian children for peace with Israel, or for a two state solution. Instead Israel's right to exist is denied and armed struggle praised. The Oslo Accords are described as "a move to get the Palestine Liberation Army into the Territories," and support for jihad is emphasized. Israel is described as "a country of gangs, born in crime." The Jews are portrayed as arrogant and sly traitors, and Zionism is a racist movement and a "germ." As a result of all of this it is clear that Palestinian children are educated in an atmosphere of incitement. Despite the Oslo peace accords, there is no positive representation of Israel or of the benefits of peace in Palestinian education. This educational environment both encourages and glorifies violent action against Israel. The situation is the same in the media. The PA controls the Palestinian media and nothing is printed or broadcast without the approval of the Palestinian leadership. It is worth noting that when it suits Arafat's purposes the anti-Israel rhetoric of the media is easily toned down.

### What's in a Word?

'Chairman Arafat' vs. 'President Arafat'

### Practical Pointers

- ➡ Organise a petition calling for an end to Palestinian corruption.
- ➡ Write letters to politicians asking them to demand transparent accounting from the PA as a condition for aid.

### Glossary

**Fatah** - The main faction of the PLO from which Arafat came.

**Tanzim** - the youth wing of Fatah.

**Palestinian Authority (PA)** - this can be used in two senses. It can refer to the whole area under Palestinian Autonomy. Since statehood has not been declared this is used in place of the term "Palestine". It is also used to refer specifically to the Palestinian leadership.



# THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEE ISSUE



- The UN Partition Plan of 1947 allowed for the establishment of two states. One for the Jews and one for the Palestinian Arabs. The Jews accepted this. The Arab leadership rejected the offer of a state.
- Despite the Arab rejection of the Partition Plan, the Jews of Palestine declared Independence in May 1948. Even before this, up to 30,000 Arabs left to go to surrounding countries. Following the establishment of Israel more left. In total, around 700,000 of the Arab inhabitants of the area left Israel and moved to surrounding countries.
- Approximately one third of the refugees went to the Gaza strip (then under Egyptian control), one third went to the West Bank (under Jordanian control), and the remaining third went to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.
- The UN now estimates there to be approximately 3.1 million Palestinian refugees (1995 figures). 1.2 million of those reside in areas administered by the Palestinian Authority.
- All the figures here are controversial and disputed by all sides. As a result we have used UN figures, themselves open to dispute, wherever these have been available.

**Accusation:** Israel systematically expelled the Palestinian citizens of the area in 1948

**Rebuttal:** Why 700,000 Palestinians abandoned their homes in 1948 is a controversial question. The Palestinians claim that they were expelled. Recent scholarship has shown that this did happen but only in a few, isolated examples. The overwhelming majority left of their own accord to avoid the war, or because they were encouraged to do so by the Arab leadership. Much of the propaganda at the time encouraged the local Arab population to leave in order to allow the surrounding Arab armies to defeat the new Jewish state. In fact the Jewish Leadership tried to persuade the Arabs to stay. They offered reassurances and guarantees to them. For example, at the start of the Arab offensive on Haifa in early April 1947 around 25,000 Arab civilians fled the area. Jewish Forces captured Haifa on April 23rd. A British police report dated a few days later observed "every effort is being made by the Jews to persuade the Arab populace to stay and carry on with their normal lives". Golda Meir travelled to Haifa to try to convince them to stay. However the Arab civilians feared being accused of being traitors. By the end of the battle over 50,000 Palestinian Arabs had left. This pattern was repeated all over Israel. Those who did stay were given full citizenship after the War of Independence ended. Full equality for all Israel's citizens regardless of religion was enshrined in the Declaration of Independence.

**Accusation:** Israel's refusal to consider a "right of return" for the refugees condemns them to remain without a home

**Rebuttal:** Many of the Palestinian refugees have spent the last five decades living in difficult conditions. When the refugees fled they were placed in refugee camps. The Arab Governments refused to take steps to absorb the refugees or integrate them into the population. They felt that doing so would undermine the refugees' claim to a right of return, and were reluctant to disturb

their own population balances; a large Palestinian presence in Jordan and Lebanon led to serious conflict in these countries. At the same time, between 1948-1951, around 500,000 Jews were expelled from the Arab nations amongst which they lived, or fled their homes due to persecution and made their way to Israel. The new-born state absorbed and fully integrated these refugees from Iraq, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, Libya and Morocco. Today there are no Jewish refugees from Arab lands, as they have all been resettled.

The problem with the Palestinian right of return is the fact that it concerns the right of refugees to "return" to land in Israel. Any future peace deal between the Palestinians and Israel would create a Palestinian state. The refugees would then be able to move to this Palestinian state, which would be the homeland for Palestinians. Before the negotiations broke down in 2000, Israel was considering plans to give compensation to the refugees.

Israel won't consider a full right of return for Palestinians to Israel because this would be in direct contradiction to the idea of a two state solution. A two state solution means that there would be one state for the Jews (Israel) and one state for the Palestinians. If millions of Palestinians were to move to Israel rather than Palestine, as Arafat demand, the result would be not one but two Palestinian states.

**Accusation:** Israel has its own right of return for Jews but won't allow Palestinians an equivalent. This is just racist.

**Rebuttal:** Israel's law of return allows any Jew to move to live in Israel. Israel has no objection to an equivalent law of return to allow Palestinian refugees to move to live in Palestine. The objection is to allowing them to move to Israel. Israel was created as a state for Jews because the Holocaust proved that Jews needed a refuge. A Palestinian state can play the same role for Palestinians, but that is not Israel's job.

The influx of what now amounts to millions of Palestinians into Israel would both upset the national demographic and constitute a considerable security risk. Israel cannot accept a right of return, however this doesn't mean that there is a total impasse. Salim Tamari, a Palestinian delegate to the Refugee Working Group, set up at the Madrid Peace Talks in 1991, called for

"Israel's acceptance, in principle, of the right of Palestinians and their descendants to return to their homes. The Palestinians, in exchange, would recognize that this right cannot be exercised inside the 1948 boundaries but in a state on Palestine [in the West Bank and Gaza]. As part of these mutual

concessions, Israel should take into its territory several tens of thousands of refugees, particularly those who have family members living inside Israel."

In fact Ehud Barak's proposal at Camp David was not very far from this position. The Palestinian leadership were the ones who chose to take an all-or-nothing approach to this issue, fearing loss of support amongst the refugees.

If Israel were to absorb all the Palestinian refugees Jews could very quickly become a minority in their own land. This would undermine the entire point of the partition plan of 1947. This sought to create two states, one Jewish, one Arab. A Palestinian "right" of return would result in two Arab states and no Jewish one. This would be a direct contradiction of the "two state solution" that the Palestinians claim to accept.

**Accusation:** International law gives Palestinians a right of return

**Rebuttal:** The text of UN Resolution 194 states that:

"...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; [The UN] Instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation..."

This is the basis of Palestinian claims that the "right" to return is supported by international law, but let's look closer:

"Refugees wishing to return to their homes and **live at peace** with their neighbours should be permitted to do so".

The resolution recognises that Israel can hardly be expected to absorb a potentially hostile population that might threaten her security.

"...Facilitate the repatriation, **resettlement** and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation".

Today there are around 3.7 million refugees. The Israeli population is only 6 million. Israel is a small country with limited resources that could not practically absorb a number of people



equivalent to over 50% of the current population. The resolution allows for resettlement as a viable alternative. Israel supports the resettlement of the refugees in either the countries they have lived in for over 50 years, or in a Palestinian state. Israel has always accepted that it would absorb a small number of refugees judged on an individual basis but more than this is not practical.

"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**".

Israel has accepted that it will aid the refugees and offer some compensation but Israel cannot accept total responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem (see above). The Arab states must also accept some measure of responsibility and should therefore be bound by this resolution.

### Diverse Opinions

The question of why the Palestinian Arabs left in 1947-1949 has been the subject of much recent scholarship. Conventional opinion said that all of the Arab civilians left voluntarily. They were generally instructed to leave by their own leadership. By contrast Arab historians have accused Israel of expelling local residents or of causing them to flee in fear of their lives. Recently a school of "new historians" has emerged in Israel. They have suggested a greater culpability by Israel in the creation of the refugee problem. The most reasonable conclusion is that there were cases of expulsion and some people fled in fear of their lives. In many cases the fear was built up by propaganda from the Arab leadership. There is ample evidence that Arab leadership did encourage and instruct many people to leave, promising them that they would be able to return shortly, once the Jews were defeated. It is important to acknowledge that all these opinions exist within Israel.



### What's in a Word?

'Palestinian' vs. 'descendent of Palestinian' vs. 'Arab of Palestinian origin'.  
 'Refugee camp' vs. 'town'.



### Practical Pointers

- ➡ Distribute leaflets explaining that a TWO state solution means one state each.
- ➡ Write an article for a student paper explaining the conflict, focussing on what Arafat objected to at Camp David.





### Glossary

**Refugees** - Stateless people. This refers to the approximately 700,000 people who left their homes in 1948. It is also used to refer to their descendants, now numbering around 3.7 million.

**Palestinian** - This refers to those people and their descendants who lived in the area of British Mandate Palestine but who did not find themselves within Israel's borders after 1948. As with all nationalities however it is based on self-identification. Palestinians today are those people who consider themselves to be so. The term has generally not been used to refer to these people in 1948, since the Palestinian people have only become identified as a nation more recently. When discussing events around 1948 the term Palestinian Arab is used since Palestinians at that time was more frequently used to refer to the Jewish residents.

**Palestine** - Although this is the name that will be given to a likely future Palestinian state, here it refers to the area held under British mandate.



Resource  
Review

### The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem – Benny Morris

This book has been a landmark in the study of Israeli history. It has made an important contribution to debate and to our current understanding of Israel's history. It remains however immensely controversial. The Birth attempts to debunk two prevailing myths. One, the Arab myth that Palestinian Arabs were expelled systematically and by force from their homes, and the second Zionist myth that they simply left either voluntarily or under instructions from the Arab leadership. Morris presents a third hypothesis which says that although there were incidents in which all of these things have occurred the real cause of the refugee problem was an inevitable, unsought, result of war. In other words, no side and both sides are to blame. Due to the continuing conflict and Morris's own views the book has come to be seen in a very political light, but the main point of his argument is coherent. Morris presents compelling evidence in the form of a list that details the fate of each individual Arab village. The main thing that the Israeli activist needs to remember is that despite the desire both sides have to claim the moral high ground, what happened over 50 years ago has only limited relevance. The forward towards peace is more important than apportioning blame for events that happened over fifty years ago. Morris's book serves as a reminder that despite the point scoring approaches Israel activist are forced to take, we should acknowledge, even if only to ourselves, that the situation is rarely black and white and that Israel made and makes mistakes.

# ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

- After the 1967 Six Day War, Israel found itself in possession of considerable areas of land won in battle from Jordan, Syria and Egypt.
- Israel subsequently annexed the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. The remainder of the territories (Gaza, West Bank and Sinai) remained with an undermined status pending resolution through peace agreements.
- After 1967 the Government of Israel supported settlement building in certain strategically key areas of the Territories. The Likud government elected in 1977, increased settlement building in other areas of the West Bank and Gaza.
- In the peace agreement with Egypt (1979) the Sinai was returned to Egypt and the settlements on it were dismantled.



**Accusation:** Israeli Settlements are illegal and in violation of the Oslo peace agreements

**Rebuttal:** When Israel captured the Territories in 1967 they took over administration from powers who themselves did not have sovereignty over the areas. The Palestinian leadership, it will be remembered, themselves rejected sovereignty in these areas when they rejected the 1947 Partition Plan. These areas cannot therefore be considered occupied territories as they were not occupied from another nation with legitimate sovereignty. A more accurate term would be 'disputed territories' whose future Israel is committed to resolving through negotiations.

The main basis for suggestions of illegality appears to be Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. It states "Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive". In other words a population may not be forcibly moved from the occupied areas to other lands. But the settlements involve the voluntary movement of individuals into the so-called occupied areas, not out of them. The native population is not displaced by the settlements either. There is no attempt, nor has there ever been, to remove the Palestinian population from the West Bank or Gaza strip areas.

The Fourth Geneva Convention goes on to state that "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies", a clause inserted to prevent what is now referred to as 'ethnic cleansing'. This passage applies to involuntary transfer, and so it doesn't apply to the Israeli case.

It is important to note that the Fourth Geneva Convention only applies to cases of occupation of the territory of a High Contracting Party to the Convention. As mentioned above, the last lawful sovereignty over the Territories before Israel took control over them was that of the League of

Nations Mandate. This means that that Convention does not apply to the Israeli presence in the Territories.

The agreements between the Palestinians and the Israelis refer to the settlements as an issue to be resolved in the final status negotiations. (The point at which talks ultimately stalled). There are no restrictions on settlement building in any of the signed agreements. All they say is that no party can seek to change the status of the West Bank or Gaza Strip. A change of status would be the annexation of the land or a unilateral declaration of statehood.

**Accusation:** The Settlements are the main obstacle to Peace.

**Rebuttal:** Settlements have never been the major obstacle to peace. Before 1967 there were no settlements and still no peace agreement. The Likud Government, elected in 1977, was committed to greater settlement building. Even so within two years of coming to power it signed a peace agreement with Egypt. The agreement included the dismantlement of settlements in Sinai. In the 1994 peace agreement with Jordan settlements were not an issue.

Israel has made it clear that it is prepared to negotiate over settlements, but it is not prepared to pre-judge the outcome of negotiations by dismantling settlements before negotiations are even begun.

Senator Mitchell's report on the causes of the "Al Aqsa" Intafada recommended a settlement freeze among other confidence building measures, but also made it clear that the violence and collapse of the peace process were not due to settlement activity. The Mitchell Report also categorically dismissed the link between ceasing settlement activity and ceasing violence.

**Accusation:** The Red Cross declared the settlements a war crime.

**Rebuttal:** The Jerusalem representative of the International Red Cross Rene Kosimik, said on May 17, 2001, "The installation of a population of the occupying power in occupied territory is considered an illegal move, it is a grave breach. In principal it is a war crime." However the President of the International Red Cross, Jakob Kellenberger, responded to complaints about this by saying "The expression 'war crime' has not been used by the IRC in relation to Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories in the past and will not be used anymore in the present context...The reference made to it on May 17 was inappropriate and will not be repeated."

**Accusation:** Israel has no legitimacy and no claim in the West Bank and Gaza strip.

**Rebuttal:** The West Bank and Gaza Strip is best regarded as territory over which there are competing claims, which should be resolved in peace process negotiations. Israel has valid claims to title in this territory based not only on its historic and religious connection to the land, and its recognized security needs, but also on the fact that the territory was not under the sovereignty of any state and came under Israeli control in a war of self-defence, imposed upon Israel. At the same time, Israel recognizes that the Palestinians also entertain legitimate claims to the area. Indeed, the very fact that the parties have agreed to conduct negotiations on settlements indicates that they envisage a compromise on this issue.

**Accusation:** Israeli settlements are a provocation. The continued settlement expansion causes the Palestinian violence.

**Rebuttal:** Palestinians have claimed that their current violence was provoked by Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount. This is why it came to be called the Al Aqsa Intafada. Then they claimed that it was settlement activity that provoked the violence, which could only stop when the settlements did. In reality since Sharon's election no new settlements have been built. Construction is limited to natural growth (e.g. as a result of families expanding and requiring bigger homes). This is part of Sharon's coalition agreement with Labour.

Israeli politicians have resisted an absolute freeze on territory expansion, as this would presume the final result of negotiations before they have even been entered into.

A solution to the settlement issue and a Palestinian state was offered at Camp David. Barak offered to dismantle all the Gaza settlements. He offered the Palestinians 95% of the West Bank. This would have solved the settlement issue but the Palestinians rejected the offer and chose violence instead, in the hope that they would achieve more. Settlements, like Sharon's walk about on the Temple Mount, are simply used as a convenient excuse for violence.

### Diverse Opinions

It is important to note that Israeli public opinion on settlements is divided. Not all Israelis support settlements and many believe that they are counterproductive to Israel's interests. Some people oppose settlements because they believe that they will make peace with the Palestinians harder to achieve. However it is clear that whether or not the settlements should be there, they are not a legitimate target for terror. Nor can they serve as an excuse for terrorism. The status of settlements must be discussed, and not fought over.

### What's in a Word?

'Settlement' vs. 'suburb' vs. 'village' vs. 'rural community' vs. 'planned community'.





### Practical Pointers

- ▶ Collect and distribute testimony from children living in the Territories to personalise their suffering.



### Glossary

**Settlements** - Jewish communities living within the Territories (Gaza and West Bank)

**Territories** - This is used to refer to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These areas are referred to as the "occupied territories", "the liberated territories" the "administrated territories" and "Judea and Samaria". All of the terms are reflective of the ideology of the person using it. Language is very important in this conflict. The terms "Territories" or Gaza and West Bank will be used throughout this document as the most neutral terms available.



Resource  
Review

### The Arab Israeli Conflict; its History in Maps – Martin Gilbert

This is a great resource, which does exactly what it says in the title. In it you can find dozens of maps, which visually explain events and gives the reader a new perspective. The book starts with maps illustrating the distribution of the Jews in Palestine under all the different rulers over the centuries. It moves from early Zionism and pre-state days through all the various wars. Due to the nature of the media the book contains facts and is not heavily overshadowed by opinions, though each map is helpfully accompanied by explanatory text in surrounding boxes. It is an excellent tool, especially for the person who gets turned off by having to read loads of texts but wants an overview of the situation. The major problem with this book however is that it goes out of date quickly in such a rapidly changing region. However a new edition is due out in the middle of 2002 under the title The Routledge Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. This should contain the most recent maps post Oslo agreements.

# THE JEWISH RIGHT TO A STATE IN ISRAEL

- There has always been a Jewish presence in the land of Israel. The Jewish people have a religious and historical link to the land.
- In 1917 Arthur James Lord Balfour wrote a letter to Lord Rothschild of the Zionist Federation, which stated "His Majesty's [British] Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people"
- After the First World War Britain acquired a mandate for Palestine. An area that covers today's Israel, West Bank, Gaza and Jordan.
- In 1947 the UN voted in favour of partitioning Palestine into a state for Jews, and a state for Arabs. The Arab leadership rejected the resolution.
- In May 1948 the Jewish population of Palestine declared independence and the Jewish state was born.



**Accusation:** The creation of a Jewish state displaced the original inhabitants, the Palestinian Arabs.

**Rebuttal:** Before the Jews came to Palestine it was under-populated and neglected. The Jews cultivated and built the land. They did not displace the local population at this time, nor attempt to do so. All Jewish land was bought and paid for. Most of it was sold by the absentee landlords who owned and neglected it.

The 1947 UN Partition plan, supported by the Jewish leadership, called for the creation of two states side-by-side: one Jewish, one Arab. This would have allowed the two populations to live on the land without displacing one another. The Arab leadership were the ones who rejected the Partition Plan, both diplomatically, and by launching an attack on Israel in 1948. Even then, Israel's Declaration of Independence guaranteed "complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex". Those Arabs who stayed and did not flee in 1948 were made citizens and allowed to stay in their homes. They were not displaced.

**Accusation:** Zionism is racism/Zionism is an imperialist ideology.

**Rebuttal:** In 1975, the UN passed a resolution that declared Zionism to be Racism. This motion was pushed through by an alliance of the Arab states and the Soviet bloc. Throughout the Cold War the Soviets used Israel as a proxy by which to attack the United States. Kofi Anan, Secretary General of the UN described this as the "low point" of the history of the United Nations. The resolution was repealed in 1991. Nonetheless, there are still those who cling to this definition.

Some suggest that the Law of Return, which allows any Jew (and their non-Jewish family) to emigrate to the State of Israel, is racist. However over one million of Israel's six million citizens are not Jews. They are afforded full legal and civil rights. The Law of Return does not prohibit

non-Jews from emigrating to Israel. For example Israel accepted a number of Vietnamese boat people to enter and assume citizenship. There are general immigration laws that allow for the consideration of other cases, but history has taught us the need for a safe and secure place for Jews. American Lawyer Alan Dershowitz observed that "A world that closed its doors to Jews who sought escape from Hitler's ovens lacks the moral standing to complain about Israel's giving preference to Jews". Israel has citizens who are Jewish, Muslim, and Christian. Israeli Jews come from Europe, America, Asia, and Africa, and are of all skin-colours and races. All citizens have equal rights. Israel's open and democratic character and its protection of the religious and political rights of Christians and Muslims refute this charge of exclusivity and Racism.

There is an important difference between Nationalism and Racism. Nationalism is a belief in the right of a given nation to rule themselves. Zionism is therefore no different from any nationalist ideology. Racism is a belief that one race is superior to others. Zionism is no more Racism than Palestinian nationalism is Racism. It simply demands that Jews, like other nations, can have their own state. In fact it is racism to suggest that what is acceptable for others (national self-determination) is not acceptable for Jews. Anti-Zionism is frequently just Antisemitism in disguise. When once approached by a student who attacked Zionism, Martin Luther King said

"When people criticize Zionists, they mean Jews. You're talking anti-Semitism."

The pernicious accusation that Zionism is Racism reoccurred in August 2001 at the UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban. The Conference was hijacked by certain groups who sought to ignore the very real problems of racism in today's world and instead attacked Israel. This led to both Israel and the United States walking out of the Conference. In July, shortly before the WCAR the White House Press Secretary pointed out that:

"...It's also important to send a signal to the freedom loving nations of the world that we will not stand by, if the world tries to describe Zionism as racism. That is as wrong as wrong can be, and the President is proud to stand by Israel and by the Jewish community and send a signal that no group around the world will meet with international acceptance and respect if its purpose is to equate Zionism with racism."

**Accusation:** The Arabs of Palestine were the innocent victims of the guilty conscience of the world following the Holocaust.

**Rebuttal:** The Balfour declaration, which promised a Jewish State in the Land of Israel, was made in 1917, long before the Holocaust happened. The Jewish right to a state in the Land of



Israel was not based on the Holocaust. The Zionist movement began in the 1880s. The Holocaust probably increased the urgency for a resolution of the situation but the end of the Second World War saw a general rejection of Imperialism and Empire in favour of national self-determination. In 1948, the same year that Israel was established, India received Independence.

The Palestinian Arabs were not innocent victims. Many supported Hitler and Germany during World War II. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, a major leader, publicly supported Hitler and allied himself with him. Other Arab countries were slow to join the war against Hitler. Only Transjordan joined with Britain in 1939; the rest just waited to see what would happen, not declaring war on Germany until 1945, after it was clear that Germany had already lost. By contrast, 30,000 Palestinian Jews joined the British Army to fight against the Axis powers.

Finally the world did not merely create a Jewish state on Arab land. It offered both peoples in Israel independence in two separate states, as defined in the Partition Plan. Had they accepted this plan the Palestinian Arabs, who had always been ruled by outside forces, would at last have had their own homeland too.

**Accusation:** There is no Jewish historical link to the land of Israel. The Jews are just 20th century intruders in the land.

**Rebuttal:** The Land of Israel is the historical birthplace of the Jewish people. Through 2000 years of exile the link was preserved through the habit of praying in the direction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and reciting the statement "Next year in Jerusalem" at the end of Yom Kippur, the end of the Pesach seder, and at all celebrations. For two thousand years Jews left corners of their homes unfinished and broke a glass at a wedding ceremony as an expression of loss and a desire to return and rebuild Israel. Throughout that time there were Jews living in the Land of Israel, mainly in Jerusalem, Safed, Hebron and Tiberias. In 1856, before the Zionist movement even began, the Jewish population of Palestine was over 17,000.

Christianity and the Koran acknowledge the link between Israel and the Jews. Archaeological evidence and secular writings from the Roman and Assyrian empires all confirm this relationship.

### **What's in a Word?**

'Zionism' vs. 'Jewish nationalism' vs. 'Jewish colonialism' vs. 'Jewish movement for self-determination'.





### Practical Pointers

- ▶ Run a Holocaust education week.
- ▶ Screen the film Exodus.
- ▶ Invite a Holocaust survivor who went to Israel after the War to talk about their experiences.
- ▶ Run a poster campaign featuring Martin Luther King Jr's quote about anti-Zionism and Antisemitism (above).



### Glossary

**Palestinian Arabs** - The Arabs (and their descendants) living in British mandate Palestine prior to 1948

**Zionism** - The political movement, which is founded on a belief of self determination for Jews in the Land of Israel.

**Balfour Declaration** - The letter from British politician Balfour to Lord Rothschild, which asserted Britain's support for Jewish statehood in the Land of Israel.

# ISRAEL AND THE UNITED NATIONS

- Despite the role the UN played in the creation of Israel, many Israelis distrust the United Nations.
- This distrust is based on over 30 years of anti-Israel rhetoric, resolutions, and actions by the UN.
- The UN is a politicised forum where the Arab states are able to exert significant power due to their number and bloc voting.
- In 1975, in what Kofi Anan described as the low point of the organisation the UN passed Resolution 3379, which equated Zionism with Racism. This was eventually repealed in 1991.
- Echoes of this debate were heard in Durban in 2001 at the UN Conference Against Racism. Israelis concluded that racism is alive and well at the UN.
- Despite constant attempts by the Palestinians to enlarge the role of the UN in the conflict, and to introduce UN observers, Israel has resisted. This is due to a lack of trust in the impartiality of the United Nations, and a desire to negotiate directly instead of internationalising the conflict.



**Accusation:** Israel continually resists the presence of UN observers in the territories. The fact that she refuses to allow neutral international observers proves that they must have something to hide.

**Rebuttal:** Israel has opposed the presence of UN observers because past experience has shown that UN observers are ineffective. UN observers have been in Hebron, in Lebanon and in Sinai before the 1967 war. In each location they have been unable to stem the violence. A UN Emergency Force was stationed in Sinai to serve as a buffer between Israel and Egypt. In 1967, in the run up to the Six Day War Egypt ordered them to leave, which they did. In 2000 Hizbollah terrorists crossed the border from Lebanon to Israel and abducted soldiers from sovereign Israel. Not only did the UN presence not prevent the abduction but also it later emerged that the UN peacekeepers had important evidence that they withheld from Israel. Soldiers had shot a videotape that had shown the Hizbollah vehicle and members. At first the UN denied that the tape existed. Later they admitted that they had it, but denied Israel access to a it. Israeli officials were finally permitted to view it at UN premises but were refused access to copy. The UN has had a presence in Southern Lebanon since the 1980s but this has never prevented violence and fighting there. The UN were no more effective in Yugoslavia. Their rules of engagement prevent them from being a fully effective force in conflict situations.

Israel also opposes the imposition of observers because they believe that rather than aiding the peace process, UN involvement undermines it. The peace process is based on the idea of direct negotiations between the parties. Whenever the UN attempts to impose solutions and hands out statements of condemnation, to either side, they undermine direct negotiations.

In addition, Israelis have good cause to fear that the UN is not entirely even-handed when dealing with Israel. Since the cold war a pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel lobby has existed at the UN. Through bloc voting, the Arab states, together with a number of Communist countries and at times African nations, have managed to control the agenda of the UN to pass Anti-Israel resolutions and keep constant pressure on Israel. The most extreme example of this was Resolution 3379 in 1975, which branded Zionism as racism. This is one of many examples of resolutions, statements and actions against Israel.



### **Diverse Opinions**

Some people in Israel support the introduction of an international observer force. They believe that this would calm the situation, and force the Palestinians to eventually return to the negotiating table. Whilst all acknowledge that international observers might not be an ideal step, there are hopes that any calming of the situation would only help.

**Accusation:** No other country in the world, whether member of the UN or not, has been so frequently criticised by the UN.

**Rebuttal:** It's true that Israel is the focus of more investigative committees, special representatives, and rapporteurs than any other state in the UN system. The special representative of the Director-General of UNESCO visited Israel 51 times during 27 years of activity. A "Special Mission" has been sent by the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation to Israel and the territories every year for the past 17 years. This is indisputable. What is disputed is the reason for this. Israel has been the subject of many Emergency Special Sessions of the UN. Yet bizarrely no such session has ever been convened with respect to the Chinese occupation of Tibet, the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, the slaughters in Rwanda, the disappearances in Zaire or the horrors of Bosnia. Israel is a democracy. All of these other countries are run by authoritarian regimes. It is ludicrous to suggest, as the UN frequently does, that Israel is a worse abuser of human rights than Iraq or Syria. The Commission on Human Rights routinely adopts totally disproportionate resolutions concerning Israel. Of all condemnations of this agency, 26 percent refer to Israel alone, while rogue states such as Syria and Libya are never criticized. The special rapporteur assigned to the Territories by the commission was given a mandate very different from that of any other special rapporteur.

In August 2001 the UN held the World Conference Against Racism in Durban. The conference became a front for virulent Antisemitism and anti-Zionism not heard since the days of UN Resolution 3379. Israel and the USA ultimately walked out in protest. Inside and outside the conference hall Jews and Israelis became the targets of hate-filled and politically motivated

attacks. Deputy Foreign Minister Rabbi Michael Melchior, representative of the Israeli Government at the conference asked:

"Can there be a greater irony than the fact that a conference convened to combat the scourge of racism should give rise to the most racist declaration in a major international organization since the Second World War?"

In short the UN is and always has been a political and politicised organisation where power is in the hands of those who are able to organise bloc votes. For example, Israel is the only member state of the UN excluded from a regional group. Geographically it should sit on the Asian group but the Arab states have continually denied her access. As such, Israel cannot sit on the Security Council or other key committees. This only changed in May 2000, when Israel accepted an invitation to become a temporary member of the Western European and Others (WEOG) regional group. Even so, Israel's membership in the WEOG is severely limited. Every four years Israel will have to reapply for membership, since its status is only temporary. Israel is not allowed to present candidacies for open seats in any UN body for two years and is not able to compete for major UN bodies, such as the Economic and Social Council, for a longer period. Also, for the next two years, Israeli representatives are not allowed to run for positions on the UN Council. Besides these restrictions, Israel is only allowed to participate in WEOG activities in the New York office of the UN. Israel is excluded from WEOG discussion and consultations at the UN offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Rome and Vienna; therefore, Israel cannot participate in UN talks on human rights, racism and a number of other issues handled in these offices. No other country is subject to such restrictions. As US Ambassador to the UN Jean Kirkpatrick has noted

"The UN has the image of a world organization based on universal principles of justice and equality. In reality, when the chips are down, it is nothing other than the executive committee of the Third World dictatorships."

This is the reason that Israel has received more criticism than any other country.

### Practical Pointers

- Get an international relations expert to talk about Israel and the UN.
- Organise a petition calling on the UN to better enforce quiet on Israel's Lebanese border.
- Enter a team as Israel for a model United Nations, and do well, or enter one as Syria and be deliberately poor.
- Organise letter writing to national politicians or representatives at the UN, complaining about specific instances of unfair treatment of Israel.





### Glossary

**UN** - United Nations. The main headquarters of which is based in New York. The Secretary General is Kofi Annan

**WEOG** - Western European and Others Group. One of the UN regional groups

**ILO** - International Labour Organisation

**UNESCO** - United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

**General Assembly** - This is the main organ of the United Nations. It is composed of representatives of all Member States, each of which has one vote. Decisions on important questions require a two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are reached by a simple majority. The decisions of the Assembly have no legally binding force for Governments but they carry the weight of world opinion on major international issues.

**Security Council** - The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 members. 5 are permanent. The remaining 10 are elected by the general assembly for 2 year terms.

### Israel's Ministry for Foreign Affairs Website.

[www.mfa.gov.il](http://www.mfa.gov.il)

The MFA site is an official site from the Israeli Government. It reflects the Government line on the situation. It provides copies of important documents and transcripts of speeches. The MFA also have useful background information about the Government and the State. Most usefully the site contains just about every official paper that is available in the public arena relating to the peace process and the conflict. One could even print off the entire Oslo Accords if one wished to do so, or read the important speeches made by the key people in each situation.



Resource  
Review

# ISRAEL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- In 1947 the UN voted to allow the creation of the State of Israel on part of the land held at that time under British mandate.
- All of the other states in the area were, and remain, under Arab rule.
- Israel is different to the other states in the area in particular because it is more westernised politically and culturally.
- At first the countries surrounding refused to recognise her existence. This changed in 1979 when Israel signed a formal peace treaty with Egypt, and then in 1994 when she signed one with Jordan. However many Arab countries maintain their position of non-recognition.



**Accusation:** Israel doesn't belong in the Middle East. All she does is bring instability to the region.

**Rebuttal:** Israel belongs in the Middle East because for almost 2000 years of exile from the Land of Israel, the Jews never forgot their link with the region, and regularly talked of return to Israel. The desire to return was built into Jewish ritual life in prayers said at Pesach and Yom Kippur, in the direction of prayer, and the smashing of a glass at Jewish weddings. There have been Jews living in Israel continuously for over 2000 years, and Jews who were able to emigrated to Israel throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period. When the nascent Zionist movement was offered a homeland for the Jews in Africa by the British, the offer was rejected because there was no authentic link to the land that was offered.

When enemies of Israel say that the Jews don't belong in the Middle East, one needs to ask the question where do they think the Jews do belong? How could the Jews have been given a state, like other nations, anywhere but Israel?

There is plenty of instability in the Middle East that isn't connected to Israel. The Iran-Iraq War, the internal violence in Egypt between secularists and Islamists, the Iranian revolution, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait are just a few examples. The Middle East is an unstable region as a result of deep religious division, the legacy of imperialism, and brutal regimes that fail to share a huge oil wealth with the masses. Israel is used as an excuse and a diversion by regimes that do not want to face up to their own difficulties.

**Accusation:** American support for Israel leads to widespread resentment in the Middle East. It is because of Israel that America suffered the September 11 attacks.

**Rebuttal:** The only link between Israel and America on September 11<sup>th</sup> is that both countries are victims of militant Islamic terrorism.

It is vital to understand the nature and motivation of Militant Islamic Terrorism. This is a form of terrorism that arises from religious extremism. Unlike groups such as the IRA, ETA, groups such as Al Qaeda do not seek national independence, but rather aspire to place the world under Islamic rule. This desire is clearly revealed in the covenant of Hamas.

“Only under the shadow of Islam could the members of all regions coexist in safety and security for their lives, properties and rights. In the absence of Islam, conflict arises, oppression reigns, corruption is rampant and struggles and wars prevail.”

Rather than America being a target for Islamic terrorists because she supports Israel, the reverse is closer to the truth. America is dubbed “the Great Satan” by these groups, and Israel as “the Little Satan”. It is America and all that she represents (western liberal democracy, power etc.) that is the primary enemy. Israel, America’s ally, is merely seen as a manifestation or proxy of America in the Middle East. Even if Israel did not exist America would still be targeted by Islamic terrorists.

Osama Bin Ladin himself played down the connection between the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks on the USA, and Israel. His declared aim was to get American forces out of Saudi Arabia and other places in the Middle East. The presence of American forces prevents extremist elements gaining power in a number of Islamic countries, and is also objected to on ‘religious’ grounds.

Attempts to blame Israel, or even the United States, for the tragic and evil terrorist attacks that took place on September 11 are a classic example of blaming the victim. Al Qaeda terrorists were to blame for the terror attacks, just as rapists and not women are to blame for rape. Israel and America are both victims of Islamic terror. Where resentment exists in the international arena the correct way to deal with this is through dialogue, and not mass murder.

Finally, experts agree that an operation such as the one that took place of September 11<sup>th</sup> probably took a number of years to plan. In other words planning was underway even whilst the PA and Israel were negotiating and when the Palestinians were offered a state at Camp David. In fact, Al Qaeda attacks on American targets, including the World Trade Center, were carried out throughout the 90s as Israel and the Palestinians negotiated peace within the framework of the Oslo Accords. It is not Israel’s policies, but rather her very existence that bothers the terrorists.



**Accusation:** Israel is a discriminatory state, and claims that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East are ridiculous. There are a number of imperfect democracies, such as Israel's, in the region.

Winston Churchill once famously said that... "Democracy is the worst form of Government, except for all those others that have been tried from time to time". Israel's democracy, like all democracies, may be flawed, but it clearly meets all the important measures of democracy.

A guaranteed framework of equal citizen rights including access to justice and freedom of expression, assembly and association as well as economic and social rights to enable all citizens to exercise their freedoms. All Israel's citizens, regardless of religion and ethnicity, are equal before the law. The formal equality of Israel's citizens is spelt out in her Declaration of Independence.

Institutions of representation and accountability including free and fair elections and procedures to ensure continuous accountability of public officials to the public. Israel not only has regular free and fair elections in which all citizens may vote, but public officials are also accountable under the law. Recently, for example, Israeli politicians have been imprisoned for corruption. A free and open press ensures public accountability.

A civil society which includes free and pluralistic media of communication and civil associations, consultative processes and other forums to ensure popular participation in the political process. Israeli society is marked by an abundance of non-Governmental organisations and political pressure groups. The free and open society allows all of these groups to operate openly even where their opinions run contrary to the Government's.

Where there is inequality in Israel, as there is in other countries, this is not as a result of the law.

By contrast, most Arab countries do not have free media. Rather media outlets are controlled by the State. The only significant exception to this the Qatar's Al Jazeera television channel.

Though it is clear that free and fair elections are not the only thing required for democracy, nonetheless it is impossible to have a democracy without them. Only in Morocco was the opposition party actually invited to form a Government after winning an election. In other Arab countries the ruling power has shown itself to be reluctant to give up power. A report by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) states that:

There is a real fear on the part of many Arab regimes that free and fair elections would oust them from power in no time at all. A common excuse promulgated by

non-democratic leaders is that the Arab people do not know what is good for them and they might therefore abuse democracy, were it not controlled. As a result, elections – when and if they are to be held on whatever level – have to be “carefully monitored” and their results carefully “handled”

In most countries too there are issues over free associations. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are often subject to repressive laws, especially in Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.

Of all the countries in the Middle East only Israel shows consistent commitment to democracy. Only in Israel is there found an open and free press, free and fair elections, freedom of speech, assembly, and association; and equal rights before the law to all citizens.

A common accusation from critics of Israel is that the fact that Palestinians don't have a vote in Israeli elections is undemocratic. This overlooks the fact that (a) Palestinians in the Territories are part of the nascent Palestinian political entity, and as such vote in Palestinian elections (b) extending Israeli democracy to Palestinians in the Territories would risk getting in the way of a two state negotiated peace agreement.

**Accusation:** Israel isn't interested in Peace in the Middle East. Israel should be negotiating with Syria to bring peace to the region.

**Rebuttal:** Israel has often tried to reach peace with her neighbours. Most of the time however she been unable to find a partner for peace. Immediately after the 1967 War Israel presented America with a peace plan that involved the return of most of the captured territories in exchange for recognition and peace. Shortly afterwards the Arab countries met at Khartoum and issued their response: no to recognition, no to negotiations, and no to peace. Israel has never been the obstacle to peace in the region. As soon as Egypt and Jordan were ready to enter talks with Israel negotiations began, and peace accords were signed in 1979 and 1994 respectively. Peace talks with Syria have been attempted on a number of occasions, most recently in January 2000 in Shepherdstown in the USA. These talks were not fruitful largely due to Syria's intransigence and unwillingness to compromise. Israel has always made clear that when Syria declares itself ready for talks Israel will be only too happy to enter into negotiations. In the meantime however Israel has chosen to prioritise the Palestinian track of the peace talks as the most pressing.

**Accusation:** Jews in the Middle East who went to live in Israel left as a result of Zionist agitation. There is no comparison with the plight of the Palestinian refugees who are now scattered around the Middle East.

**Rebuttal:** After the creation of the state of Israel many thousands of Jews who had lived in Arab countries left to live in Israel. Some of those who went were motivated by the Zionist movement, others by a deep-seated religious and cultural desire to go to Israel, a desire that had been fostered since exile.

In the 1940s in a number of Arab countries including Iraq, Libya, Egypt and Syria, there were anti-Jewish riots in which over a thousand Jews were killed. This, together with growing official Antisemitism after the establishment of Israel, led large numbers of Jews to flee their previous homes for the new Jewish state.

Israel worked to absorb these refugees, at what for such a young and poor country was a great difficulty and expense. In contrast, Palestinian refugees were never adequately re-housed by Arab states, who didn't want large Palestinian populations, and felt no responsibility for a refugee problem caused as a result of a war that they had started (in 1948).

One of the strongest proofs that the Jews' move to Israel was not voluntary was the fact that, though many of them were very rich, they were forced to leave behind all of their property and possessions. These were confiscated by the states from which they fled. These Jews have not received compensation from the Arab states.

### **Glossary**

**Al Qaeda** – The terrorist organization of Osama Bin Laden

**Hamas** – An Islamic terrorist organization based committed to the liberation of the whole of Palestine and the destruction of Israel

**Militant Islam** – An extremist form of Islam which aspires to introduce Islamic rule throughout the world and sees itself as being locked in an existential conflict with the West and especially America.



## ARABS IN ISRAEL



- Out of Israel's population of 6 million around 1.1 million are not Jews or the close family of Jews. This number is made up of 945,000 Muslims, 130,000 Christians and 100,000 Druze.
- The Declaration of Independence guarantees "complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex"

**Accusation:** Arabs are second-class citizens in Israel

**Rebuttal:** From the moment of the declaration of the state, despite the war being fought with Arab states, the Arab inhabitants of Israel were awarded full social and political equality. The only legal distinction between Jews and Arabs is that Arabs are not required to join the army, as most Jews must. This concession is to spare them the need to fight against people of their own wider nation in other states or in the territories. Some Jewish groups are given a similar dispensation. The Druze community have voluntarily accepted upon themselves army service, as have Bedouins and other Arab groups.

Arabs have equal voting rights and currently have 10 representatives in the Knesset among the 120 seats. Recently, there was even a Druze cabinet minister. Israel is one of the few countries in the Middle East where Arab women are given a vote. Along with Hebrew, Arabic is an official language of Israel.

All this is not to say that there are no conflicts, or that the Arab population of Israel have no complaints. There is unofficial discrimination, as there is against minorities in most countries, and Arab communities complain that their schools and towns receive less money than Jewish schools and towns. At the end of 2000 a number of violent demonstrations broke out amongst the Arab citizens of Israel. Despite this the Government is committed to ensuring the equality promised in the Declaration of Independence. The standard of living for all Israelis, including Israeli Arabs, is far higher than people enjoy in other countries in the region. People have more freedom, more rights, and more opportunities than in Syria, Iraq or Lebanon for example. The Druze community of the Golan Heights, for this reason, resist the prospect of Israel returning the Golan to Syria, as they have no desire to live under the authoritarian regime of that country.

Despite the many years of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, relations between Jewish and Arab citizens have stayed good and Israeli Arabs have been loyal citizens of the state.

**Accusation:** Israel treats her Arabs like Apartheid South Africa treated blacks.

**Rebuttal:** Israel has always consciously tried to avoid imitating the situation in South Africa. Arab Israelis have full voting rights, representation in parliament, and access to education at all levels, something which South African blacks were denied. Israeli Arabs have the right to live and work anywhere in the country, again, something that was never the case for black South Africans.

The situation in the Territories is different. The Palestinians in the Territories are not citizens of Israel; the area is not sovereign Israel. As a result, Palestinians in the Territories do not vote in Israeli elections. The security situation in the West Bank and Gaza strip has led to the imposition of restrictions, particularly on movement. Palestinians could only be given Israeli citizenship and voting rights in Israeli elections (as those living in Jerusalem were) if Israel annexed the territories (that is, declared sovereignty and ownership over them). No Israeli government has sought to annex the Territories, as Israel prefers the solution of creating a Palestinian state, negotiated through peace talks.

Palestinians from the Territories who work in Israel are granted the same legal protection due to other workers. They receive pay and benefits similar to Jewish and Israeli Arab workers. Palestinians also attend schools and universities. South African Blacks under Apartheid enjoyed none of these rights, showing comparisons between Israel and Apartheid South Africa to be disingenuous.

### What's in a Word?

'Israeli Arab' vs. 'Arab Israeli' vs. 'Palestinian Israeli' vs. 'Israeli Palestinian' vs. 'Palestinian in Israel'.



### Practical Pointers

- ▶ Bring an Israeli Arab speaker to talk about life in Israel.
- ▶ Organise a poster campaign comparing standard of living for Israeli Arabs and Syrian Arabs.



### **Glossary**

**Israeli Arab** - The Arab citizens of Israel. Most Israeli Arabs consider themselves to be Palestinians by nationality and Israeli by citizenship, however for ease of understanding the term Israeli Arab is used here.

**Druze** - Very little information is widely available about the Druze religion. It started in the 9th Century CE as a break-away group from Islam. The religion is exclusive: they do not accept converts; they do not marry other than fellow Druze; they do not leave the faith. The Druze keep their religion secret, but one important fact that is known is the importance placed on loyalty to the host country. There are about 100,000 Druze in Israel.



# **THE FUTURE FOR ISRAEL ADVOCACY**





# THE FUTURE FOR ISRAEL ACTIVISM

Jewish students and the Jewish World have failed to truly appreciate the extent to which anti-Israel activity is changing the ways in which they ought to operate. Instead of recognising the probable long-term nature of the conflict in the Middle East, Jewish responses have been short-termist and inadequate. Jewish organisations will need to spend an increasing amount of time defending themselves and Israel, at a time when more than ever they need to promote positive images Israel and of being Jewish.

## **The Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not end any time soon**

Unfortunately, local populations on each side have become less trusting of the other side. As the number of deaths rises, trust decreases, and the possibility of any sort of settlement drops. The Palestinian population turns to rejectionist movements; the Israeli population drifts to the right, to support parties who are less willing to make concessions for a peace which cannot be guaranteed.

## **The Palestinians will Attempt to Enlist Moslem Support**

One characteristic of what Samuel Huntingdon calls a 'fault line war' between different civilizations – here Judaism and Islam – is that the local protagonists have a very difficult time reaching a peaceful settlement on their own. Unfortunately, as each side gets drawn deeper into conflict, memories and thoughts are of deaths, security lapses, and retaliation. The Palestinian leadership will attempt to characterise the Palestinians as Islamic victims to the rest of the Arab and Islamic world. The leadership of core Islamic states will attempt to contain the conflict by forcing the Palestinians to reach a settlement, but be constrained in their efforts to do so by popular support for the Palestinian 'victims'.

## **Israel and the Palestinians will Rely Upon Diaspora Support**

As the only country that is primarily Jewish, Israel has no natural allies, in the way that the Palestinians do. For this reason Israel will need to mobilise her Jewish supporters to promote her interests in the West, particularly in the United States. Without support abroad, Israel will be unable to counter-balance support given to the Palestinians by Islamic countries, which will force her into belligerence. The Palestinian Diaspora in the West will be mobilised to support Palestinian interests, and will come in to consistent and direct conflict with Jews.

## **Moslems In the West will Actively Support Palestinians**

As the conflict in the Middle East drags on, Moslems in the West will increasingly become drawn in. Palestinians will present themselves in religious terms, and will serve as a rallying point for Moslems, who will attempt to mobilise in order to support Palestinian demands.

### **Jews Will Be Outnumbered by Moslems on Most Campuses**

More and more Moslems will attend university in the next few years. As a young population becomes increasingly affluent, the number of Islamic students will rise in the West. Where Islamic students are highly mobilised, they may come into conflict with supporters of Israel.

### **To the Extent that She Manages to Defend Herself Against Attack, Israel Will Have a Hard Time Enlisting Liberal Support**

The nature of a well-trained army, equipped with advanced technology, fighting against guerrilla and terrorist forces, is that it will appear to be a powerful oppressor. Terrorists hide in built up areas, around civilians. Israeli F-16s bombing empty buildings creates the impression that Israel is a powerful bully; Palestinians will continue to be able to portray themselves as weak victims of Israeli aggression. Israeli attempts to defend against attack will necessarily seem brutal – killings of terrorists planning attacks will be portrayed as “extra-judicial killings”, attempts to prevent terrorists entering Israel will be portrayed as “siege”, attempts to prevent incitement by Palestinian TV will be portrayed as “disproportionate response” and “escalation” using American weaponry. Western Liberals will be torn between their support for a near-Western state attempting to defend herself against terrorism, and natural support for the underdog, and against too-powerful Jews.

### **Jewish Organisations Will Fail to Realise the Extent of the Threat**

Gradual change is difficult to detect, appears temporary, and is usually responded to in a piecemeal way. The rise of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish activity in the Diaspora will continue to be responded to by introducing temporary measures – such as working groups, task-forces, and campaigns. The underlying assumption behind all of these responses will be that the difficulties they face are ephemeral, and will disappear soon. Responses will be inadequate because they will fail to recognise that there is likely to be a significant period of anti-Israel activity, which is likely to carry on for years, and out-last the current period of Middle-East violence. Attitudes to Israel, amongst Islamic and left-leaning students will be highly negative, and will be translated into action for years to come. Jewish groups on the other hand, will fail to invest adequately in education, training, and the preparation of leaders before they get to campus.

### **Attitudes Towards Israel Amongst Jewish Students in the Diaspora will Polarise, and Become One Dimensional**

A number of Jewish students will become distant from Israel, and come to see her as an oppressor state. The majority of Jewish students will remain supportive of Israel, but will begin to see Israel as little more than a country under-siege. Israel will cease to play a role as a centre of positive Jewish identity for most Jewish students, and will come to be seen as an embattled country in need of Diaspora help.

### **Images of Israel will Affect Jewish Identification**

Jewish students who see Israel in primarily negative ways will become alienated from much Jewish activity, which after all will focus more and more on defending Israel in the international arena. Jewish students who support Israel will be increasingly driven by a negative Jewish identity – the need to defend Jewish interests so that Jews are not persecuted again – which will fail to satisfy in the long-term in this age of quest for personal meaning.

### **Jewish Student Groups will Spend Increasing Time Defending Israel and Jewish Interests, just when they most need to Promote Positive Aspects of Jewish Life**

Unfortunately, Jewish student groups will be forced involuntarily into the front line of the battle against anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment. This battle will take up a large, and increasing, amount of time. Jewish student groups will have less and less time for positive Jewish education; a failure to integrate educational and campaign activities will stem at least in part from the temporary 'task-force' nature of pro-Israel activity.

### **Jewish Educational Organisations Will Fail to Respond Adequately to the New Threats Facing Jewish Students**

One hangover from the Seventies and Eighties will be that a number of organisations that had difficulty adjusting their aims once there was no longer a significant anti-Israel mobilisation in the West, will be that some organisations will be reluctant to focus on the new threats facing young Jews. Nervous of being accused of irrelevance once again, and convinced by the necessity of positive Jewish education, these organisations will respond slowly to the real needs of the hour. Instead of pushing an educational line that recognises the primary importance to the young Jew of anti-Israel activity, these groups will ignore the current reality in nearly all of their activities. This failure will be particularly acute in the training of young leaders as a result of the assumption that anti-Israel mobilisation will be short-lived. This inadequate response will be magnified because key personnel, as experts in education, will be uncomfortable dealing with campaigning and activism.

# APPENDICES

## OPERATION "DEFENSIVE SHIELD"



- At the end of April 2002, following the worst month yet for terrorism, in which attacks occurred on a daily basis, the IDF entered a number of West Bank towns, previously under the control of the Palestinian Authority in an operation code named Defensive Shield
- The stated aim of the operation was to destroy the terrorist infrastructure and the army only entered locations from where terrorist attacks had originated.
- The government was clear from the beginning that it intended to remain in these areas only as long as it took to complete the mission. There was to be no permanent reoccupation. However equally the Army would not withdraw until its aims were met.

**Accusation:** The so-called operation defensive shield was a massive over-reaction by Israel to terrorism. The operation was actually merely revenge on the Palestinian people and a repeat of what Sharon did in Lebanon in the 80s.

### **Rebuttal:**

In March 2002 alone 126 Israeli citizens were killed in the almost daily terrorist attacks that were being inflicted on Israel. This was the scene right before the Israeli army launched "Operation Defensive Shield". No government can accept the continual attack on its citizens without reacting. If you look at this as a percentage of the population, this is an even higher rate than the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the USA. No one expected America to absorb that kind of attack without reacting and there was broad support for the actions the USA took in Afghanistan and for its battle against Al-Quada. It is both the right and responsibility to the Government to react to this kind of terror. This kind of terrorism cannot be permitted to triumph. The consequences if this does prevail will be felt not only by Israel but also by all Western nations. That became clear on September 11<sup>th</sup>. As such Israel's battle against the terrorism is fought not only on her behalf but also on behalf of us all.

The operation was not about revenge or punishment. In fact it had defined strategic aims. The aim was to root out the infrastructure of terror. That is why the targeted areas were chosen. They were the ones where the terrorist cells were based, where the labs and arms caches were. Jenin for example served as a base for 23 terror attacks. The Palestinian people were not targeted. The terrorists were the target of the operation. The operation was not an attack on civilians but a battle between two armies. The Israeli Army and a Terrorist Army.

The Lebanon War began as Operation Peace for Galilee where the army sought to root out PLO terrorists from Southern Lebanon. However the short-term action turned into a much longer-term operation - it took almost 20 years for the Israeli soldiers to completely leave Lebanon. Israel has learned important lessons since then, including the importance of defined aims and conclusions of operations. Both the military and political leadership have been clear from the start that Operation Defensive Shield was not an excuse for re-occupation and that the army had no intention of remaining in the areas that it entered. The plan was to enter, destroy the terrorists and their resources and leave. This is exactly what happened. In each case where the military aims were achieved, the army withdrew as planned. Israel resisted a premature withdrawal. The entire operation would have been a waste of time and lives if Israel had bowed to political pressure and failed to complete the aims of the operation. However once the aims were fulfilled the army withdrew as promised.

**Accusation:** Israel soldiers massacred hundreds of people in Jenin and other locations and many innocent civilians were killed because they got in the way. In addition the army caused unnecessary damage to property and showed no respect for the people living there.

**Rebuttal:** The Jenin massacre is a total fiction. No such thing ever happened. It was propaganda designed to bring world pressure to bear on Israel. No human rights groups, or journalists that toured Jenin after the battle were able to find evidence of anything other than a fierce battle. Indeed UNWRA concluded that no massacre had taken place. The Israelis say that 52 Palestinians were killed in Jenin. The official Palestinian figure is 56. In either case that is a long way from a massacre. 23 Israeli soldiers were killed in the town, which makes the whole thing sound more like a battle.

Many accusations against Israel have been reported as fact in the international media. These have been later proved to be false. No massacre took place. No massive abuses of human rights. The Palestinians authorities conspired in perpetuating this false propaganda. For example on April 8<sup>th</sup> 2002 the Army contacted the Palestinian authorities in the area, including the PA Ministry of Health and the Red Crescent, to facilitate the removal and burial of the bodies from the Jenin battles. The IDF guaranteed the safe passage and protection of the medical personnel. However there was no one prepared to remove and bury the bodies preferring instead to leave

the bodies in place so that they might serve as anti-Israel propaganda. As a result when journalists and human rights activists entered Jenin on April 14<sup>th</sup> they commented widely on the stench of human bodies creating an impression of a massacre and hundreds of unburied bodies. In fact there was a much smaller number of dead in the city, almost all of which were killed with arms in their hands.

There was significant property damage in Jenin though not as much as the propaganda suggested. Only 95 out of more than 1000 houses were destroyed. Even where houses were destroyed there is more to it than meets the eye. In an April 14<sup>th</sup> 2002 interview with CNN, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres explained that most of the destroyed homes were booby-trapped with explosives. As a result the only way for the soldiers to proceed safely was to destroy the buildings themselves. These were not homes belonging to innocent people, wantonly destroyed by a vicious army. Innocent people do not wire their homes with explosives. People wiring their homes with explosives do not expect to return to those homes.

Thirty Israeli soldiers died in "Operation Defensive Shield" and many more were injured. The reason this figure was so high is that the Israeli Army were trying to minimise civilian casualties, even where doing so put their own soldiers at risk. In a number of cases people who were appearing to surrender were in fact wired with explosives and aimed to kill as many soldiers as possible. It would be as effective, and much safer for the army to simply bomb the refugee camps and terrorist bases in order to destroy the infrastructure, much as was done in Afghanistan. However this form of warfare, whilst much safer for the army creates much higher civilian casualties. Instead the IDF sent in infantry soldiers who searched house to house to root out terrorists from among a populace. The Palestinian casualties were therefore minimised and as a result most of those killed were armed terrorists and not innocent civilians.

Far from having no respect for the Palestinians, the soldiers' behaviour in this operation was exemplary. Israel was rightly proud of the moral conduct of the reservists. There are dozens of stories of soldiers who were stationed in homes in the refugee camps and who, before withdrawing made sure to clean the place and wash the floors. In several cases the soldiers themselves took up a personal collection to compensate the families for damage or inconvenience.

**Accusation:** The Israelis prevented a UN fact finding mission to Jenin, this clearly shows they have something to hide.

**Rebuttal:** Israel did not oppose a UN fact-finding mission to Jenin. She merely sought to ensure that the terms and aims of the mission were fair. Among Israeli objections to the initial proposal of the mission was that the members were not nominated in co-ordination with Israel as had been promised. Also conflicting information was given as to the parameters of the mission. Israel contended that among the representatives there should not only be human rights experts, but also experts in terrorism and military operations. Israel doesn't deny that suffering occurred in Jenin. The issue that is under contention is why that occurred. Though protracted negotiations occurred between the UN and Israel, no agreement was reached under which Israel could be confident of fair treatment. Israel has good reason to fear that they might not be treated fairly by the UN given the constant and disproportionate criticism it receives. For example on Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup> 2002 The UN passed a resolution condemning Israel's West Bank offensive, only hours after a suicide bomber killed 15 civilians inside the green line. No criticism was made against this attack. The UN Human Rights Commission even passed a resolution a few weeks earlier that advocates the use of "all available means including armed struggle" to establish a Palestinian state. Nonetheless Israel wanted the mission to take place in order to expose the myth of the Jenin massacre as the blood libel that it is. Kofi Anan, the Secretary General of the UN, announced on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2002 his intention to abandon the fact-finding mission due to a lack of Israeli co-operation. However perhaps the real reason was that by this point the true number of casualties had emerged leaving the UN with nothing to investigate.

**Accusations:** Israel is deliberately, or at the very least negligently, endangering holy Christian sites

**Rebuttal:** Religious sites of all faiths, have always been protected in Israel. Early in April 2002 a group of armed terrorists entered the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to evade Israeli soldiers. They held hostage the priests and other civilians who were there. During the siege that ensued the IDF offered medical and humanitarian aid on a number of occasions but the terrorists refused. The IDF asked the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide assistance but their representatives refused to enter the Church. After the siege ended 90 weapons were found within the Church together with ammunition. At no time did the Israeli army shell the church or attempt to enter. No damage was done to Church property by the Israelis. Indeed it was the terrorists who endangered the Church. They were the ones who entered armed, abusing the tradition of asylum. They held hostages there. Israel went out of her way to preserve the integrity of the compound and to reassure Church Authorities. They worked hard to reach a negotiated solution to the standoff. Numerous lies were spread about Israeli attacks on the Church. All were proved to have no foundation. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2002 the Israelis were accused of



killing a priest in an operation in Bethlehem. The named priest later called the Vatican embassy to confirm that he was unharmed, as were all other church officials. In an April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002 interview Arafat said "They burned the mosque that was located in the Church of Nativity and ruined many churches and mosques." In fact no churches or mosques have been burned, bombed or damaged at all.

**Accusation:** Israel has targeted Yasser Arafat and prevented him from being able to stop the terrorists.

**Rebuttal:** Operation Defensive Shield enabled Israel to gain access to a large number of documents and evidence that unequivocally proved Arafat's complicity in terrorism. Arafat's personal offices were filled with counterfeit Israeli money. Documents found showed that Arafat personally approved funding to terrorist cells. Arafat was later quoted as saying that he was proud of giving money to the Tanzim and Fatah militias. The money was intended as humanitarian aid and had come from a variety of sources including the EU. Copies of the documents can be found on the IDF website <http://www.idf.il/newsite/english/main.asp>. Israel targeted Arafat, not to prevent him from stopping the terrorists, but to try and prevent him from supporting them.



### Diverse Opinions

Not all Israelis believe that Defensive Shield was the right approach. Many people for example believe that it will not be effective and that it is impossible to destroy terrorist infrastructure because of the nature of terrorism. Others believe that other approaches would be more effective and that military responses can at best only provide a temporary solution. Even so there are few people in Israel who question Israel's right to respond to terror, or the moral integrity of the Israeli soldiers.



### Glossary

**Church of the Nativity** – Holy Christian Church said to be built on the site of Jesus's birth

**PLO** – Palestinian Liberation Organisation

**Fatah** - The main faction of the PLO from which Arafat came.

**Inside the Green Line** – Within the area that has been under Israeli sovereignty since 1948, i.e. before the Six Day War.

**Tanzim** – Radical military wing of Fatah

## ISRAEL AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

**Accusation:** The European Parliament is right and totally justified in supporting sanctions against Israel

**Rebuttal:** In supporting sanctions against Israel the European Parliament is behaving with a double standard. They condemn Israel for responding to terror whilst it is their own taxpayer's money that is being siphoned off to support the terror. The EU is the biggest funder of the Palestinian Authority. During Operation Defensive Shield documents were found that proved that Arafat was personally approving funds from the PA to terror cells. An Israeli family is currently suing the EU for allowing their funds to be used for terrorism. Rather than stopping the aid they send the Palestinians or at least trying to control its distribution, the EU has chosen to punish Israel. Israel's actions are aimed at countering terrorism. She is doing what any other nation would do in her place. She has done nothing to deserve international censure and sanctions.

European nations were among those who voted for a UN Human Rights Commission resolution which backs "all available means including armed struggle" to establish a Palestinian State. The Belgium ambassador to the UN defended the resolution by saying that it "could be seen as a call to peace"

The Nobel Prize committee is considering requests to strip Peres of his 1994 peace prize. They are not considering removing the award from Arafat despite his support of terrorism and open incitement.

The bare facts are so outrageous and overtly unfair that it is hard to understand how such things could happen. Some people blame it on latent anti-Semitism. Others attribute it to an instinctive support for the underdog by nations who are being conned by propaganda and bias journalism. Some Israelis believe that the Europeans are trying to alleviate their own guilt about the atrocities committed during the Second World War. Europe remains dependant on Arab oil and therefore Arab countries make far more useful strategic partners. Europe itself has also not yet experienced militant Islamic terror. And finally of course there are many millions of Muslims living in Europe who governments are anxious not to alienate. Whatever the reason the reality is that the EU has not proved itself to be a balanced and fair observer when it comes to Israel and most Israeli therefore are frustrated by the unfairness but don't take the comments very seriously.