

Middle East Notes
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
May 19, 2016



Please note: Opinions expressed in the following articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

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The six featured articles and the many related links in this issue of the Middle East Notes focus on the Israel/Palestine conflict as both peoples remember the establishment of the state of Israel on the one hand and the Nakba (catastrophe) on the other. Also featured is the IDF call to its soldiers, the Israeli government and people to protect democratic values and processes; followed by talks given to the “Israel’s Influence: Good or Bad for America” conference sponsored by the Washington Report and the Institute for Middle Eastern Policy Research; and other items of interest. Subscription to the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs is highly recommended to readers in search of accurate, well researched articles on Israel/Palestine and other middle east issues.

Commentary: There have always been conflicting narratives on the beginning and continuation of the state of Israel and its repressive effect on the Palestinian people. Only in recent years has the historical, accurate data on what Palestinians all over the world call “the Nakba” been made available. Other than some respected Israeli historians however, most Israelis are not aware of, deny, or ignore the previous and continuing effects of the foundation of the state of Israel on Palestinians. Israel, with abundant government, Jewish, and evangelical Christian support from the U.S., continues to prosper. The Palestinian people (almost half of the population between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River) remain stateless, disenfranchised, repressed, and oppressed without the same democratic processes as their Israeli neighbors. The Palestinians believe that the Nakba that began in 1948 was enacted again in 1967 and continues into the present. Through the non-violent means of BDS their plight is becoming more known and publicized to more concerned people in the U.S., EU and nations of the world. Although at this time there seems to be little chance of BDS bringing about a just and peaceful solution to the current injustices any time soon, “push back” by the current Israeli government against all expressions of BDS is in fact publicizing the previous and continuing Nakba.

- Uri Avnery in Jewish Business News recalls and clarifies some of the history of the “Declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel” on May 14, 1948. The writers of the declaration had obviously read the American Declaration of Independence before drafting their own. However the introduction is a reiteration of Zionist slogans. It purports to set out the historical facts, and very dubious facts they are.
- B. Michael in Haaretz writes a satiric piece listing some 24 reasons why General Yalom has been warning the IDF, the Israeli government and people of a weakening of democratic values and processes.
- “IF AMERICANS KNEW” presents a synopsis of the Israel/Palestine conflict, beginning with the founding of Israel on May 14, 1948, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven from their homes, never to be allowed to return.
- The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs provides a transcript of Gideon Levy’s keynote address to the “Israel’s Influence: Good or Bad for America” conference sponsored by the Washington Report and the Institute for Middle Eastern Policy Research.
- The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs provides the Questions & Answers conversation after the Levy’s Keynote address.
- Kirk J. Beattie in the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs clarifies “How Congress shapes Middle East policy, and how the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) shapes Congress.”

1) [A Document With A Mission](#), Uri Avnery, *Jewish Business News*, May 12, 2016

"All this crossed my mind when I was called upon three days ago, on the eve of 'Independence Day,' to take part in a ceremony in the very hall where the original text had been read out by Ben-Gurion. I was one of the persons chosen to read it out again on the 68th anniversary. For this occasion I read the entire text of the declaration for the first time. I was not impressed.

"The original version was first drafted by some officials, then re-written by Moshe Sharett (who became Foreign Minister on that day). He was a stickler for the Hebrew language, so the text is linguistically impeccable. Ben-Gurion was not satisfied with the text, so he took it and rewrote it completely. It bears all the hallmarks of his unmistakable style. Also, he had the Chutzpah to put his signature above all the others, which appear in alphabetical order.

"The writers of the declaration had obviously read the American Declaration of Independence before drafting their own. They copied the general outline. It is not written in the edifying style of an historical document, but as a document with a mission: to convince the nations of the world to recognize our state.

"The introduction is a reiteration of Zionist slogans. It purports to set out the historical facts, and very dubious facts they are. For example, it starts with the words 'Eretz Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious, and political identity was shaped.'

"Well, not quite. I was taught at school that God promised Abraham the land while still in Mesopotamia. The 10 Commandments were given to us by God personally on Mount Sinai, which is in Egypt. The more important of the two Talmuds was written in Babylon. True, the Hebrew Bible was composed in the country, but most of the religious texts of Judaism were written in "exile".

"'Jews strove in every successive generation to reestablish themselves in their ancient homeland...' Nonsense. They most certainly did not. For example, when the Jews were expelled from Catholic Spain in 1492, the vast majority of them went to the countries of the Muslim world, with none but a handful settling in Palestine.

"Zionism, the movement to establish a Jewish nation in Palestine, was founded only at the end of the 19th century, when anti-Semitism became a powerful political force all over Europe, and the founders foresaw the calamities to come.

"The declaration emphasized, of course, recent history: 'On the 29th of November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel...'

"That is a major falsification. The UN resolution called for the establishment of TWO states: an Arab and a Jewish one (and a separate zone of Jerusalem). Omitting the call for an Arab state changes the entire character of the resolution. This was, of course, intentional. Ben-Gurion was already in secret contact with King Abdullah of Jordan, who wanted to annex the West Bank to his Transjordan kingdom. Ben-Gurion approved." . . .

"One glaring omission is the stark fact that the declaration does not make one mention of the borders of the new state. The UN partition plan drew very clear borders. In the course of the 1948 war, our side conquered considerably more territory. In the end the so-called Green Line was established. The Declaration mentions no borders, and up to now Israel remains the only state in the world which has no official borders. In this, as in almost all other matters, Ben-Gurion laid down the track along which Israel has been moving to this very day.

See also: [Link D - Netanyahu's March of Folly Is Worthy of Putin](#); [Link E - As They Celebrate Independence, Israelis Should Remember the Nakba](#); and [Link F - Israel Must Recognize Its Responsibility for the Nakba, the Palestinian Tragedy](#)

2) [Why Would That General Compare Israel to 1930s Germany? Hmm...](#), B. Michael, *Haaretz*, May 15, 2016

“What was going through that “anti-Semite” Israeli general’s head when he compared the Chosen People to 1930s Europe? A few pointers.

“With all the festivals and days of sadness behind us, we can now return to the nagging question: What on earth was going through that anti-Semite general’s head when he dared hint that we, the Chosen People, commit abominable acts like those perpetrated by the gentiles? Really, what’s he talking about?

“OK, let’s start with the small details known to everyone. Maybe he (Deputy Chief of the General Staff: Major General Yair Golan) was talking about:

1. The rising number of calls proclaiming, “Death to the unchosen people!”
2. The demands not to employ the “unchosen” ones, buy from them or rent or sell apartments to them, and drive them from the Holy Land (all sanctified by the Rabbinate and other kosher rabbis, naturally).
3. The growing thuggishness that labels every “unchosen” person a legitimate target for insults, abuse, assaults, vilification and, if possible, manslaughter.
4. A soccer team that swears its ranks will include only those of pure blood and religion, and whose fans’ most popular chant is “Death to the unchosen ones.”
5. A society that produces pogrom-like actions and lynch mobs, church and mosque arsonists, and plenty of thugs and scoundrels.
6. Elected officials encouraging extrajudicial killings on our streets.
7. A lawmaker (and his wife) openly demanding racial segregation between the pure and impure in maternity wards.

“In short, no big deal - just routine matters that no longer excite folk. Consequently, we have no choice but to expand the list and include some other items that may have escaped the collective memory...

8. Spiritual leaders who publish books that determine when it’s acceptable to kill gentiles and their children. These religious leaders still tend their flocks.
9. A movement that defends the purity of the people and its blood, and persecutes lecherous “unchosen” ones who dare consort with daughters of the Chosen Ones in order to defile them. On his Facebook page, the head of this holy movement calls for the mass murder of the “unchosen ones,” knowing no harm will befall him.
10. Tens, if not hundreds or thousands, of businesses boasting of their employees’ purity.
11. The chief Sephardi peddler of religion who declared, “Goyim were created solely to serve the Chosen People.” His noble predecessors determined that only Slavic nations were created in order to serve the then-master race. Our religious pastor surpasses them: he deemed all nations our servants.
12. The education and culture ministers, who work tirelessly to synchronize education, culture, the media and arts, so everyone speaks in unison about one people, one state, one Torah and one viewpoint.
13. The brilliant legal sophistry that prohibits the “unchosen” ones from purchasing state lands. Only the Chosen People may do so.
14. The hundreds of communities that meticulously ensure the purity of their chosen population. The “unchosen” may not enter their gates lest they cause contamination by their very presence. All of this is legal.

15. The Absentee Property Law, which regulates the assets of “absentees” even when the “absentees” are clearly present and living a stone’s throw away. Only the laws of Chosen People have clauses relating to “absent-present” persons whose presence doesn’t detract from their status as “absentees.”

16. The fact that the assets of the “chosen ones” remain theirs forever, even after thousands of years of abandonment that exceed any statute of limitations. In contrast, the assets of the “unchosen” – even when they’re still holding them – will be confiscated, stolen, expropriated and transferred to the Chosen People. Just as our magnanimous Lord in heaven decreed.

17. A society that controls millions of “inferior” people who lack civil and human rights, downtrodden by a mechanism called the “Civil Administration” and headed by a general.

18. A state that locks up a million and a half people in a gigantic enclosure, unsure whether to call it “Pale of Settlement” or the “Gaza Ghetto.”

19. A regime that imposes a grotesque legal system upon millions, which doesn’t require evidence and shows no truth, justice or compassion. However, the system does have a “court” – a contemptible theater whose main purpose is to give a “legal” and “authorized” appearance to a military dictatorship.

20. A justice minister who goes out of her way to crush the legal system, liberating the rulers at last from oppressive legal constraints.

21. A government that rules an occupied people, and sometimes its own subjects, according to emergency regulations that give it limitless authority “for security reasons.” (Damn, I wish I could remember where I’ve heard of this trick being used before.)

22. A state – unique among all the world’s democracies – in which there’s no legal way for a “chosen” person to marry an “unchosen” one.

23. A government that wholeheartedly believes in the Chosen People’s right to continue expanding eastward. This space extends from Mesopotamia to Nuweiba.

24. A state that insists it’s the “only democracy” in the Middle East, whereas it’s actually the only “military theocracy” in the entire world.

25. A state that proves pop psychology is occasionally accurate in its diagnosis: an abused child can indeed become an abusive adult.

“And that’s pretty much it.

“Is it because of these piffling details that Obersturmbannführer Golan remembered what he did? Odd. Very odd. There’s no comparison, clearly.”

3) ["A Synopsis of the Israel/Palestine Conflict."](#) If Americans Knew.com

“With the founding of Israel on May 14, 1948, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven from their homes, never to be allowed to return. Hundreds of towns were razed; villagers were massacred. Their very existence on the land was nearly wiped from history. Palestinians call May 15th Nakba Day.

“The following is a very short synopsis of the history of this conflict. We recommend that you also read the much more detailed account, **"The Origin of the Palestine-Israel Conflict."**

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

“Zionism: In the late 1800s a group in Europe decided to colonize this land. Known as Zionists, they represented an extremist minority of the Jewish population. Their goal was to create a Jewish homeland, and they considered locations in Africa and the Americas, before settling on Palestine. At first, this immigration created no problems. However, as more and more Zionists immigrated to Palestine – many with the express wish of taking over the land for a Jewish state – the indigenous population became increasingly alarmed. Eventually, fighting broke out, with escalating waves of violence. Hitler’s rise to power, combined with Zionist activities to sabotage efforts to place Jewish refugees in western countries, led to increased Jewish immigration to Palestine, and conflict grew.

“UN Partition Plan

“Finally, in 1947 the United Nations decided to intervene. However, rather than adhering to the principle of ‘self-determination of peoples,’ in which the people themselves create their own state and system of government, the UN chose to revert to the medieval strategy whereby an outside power divides up other people’s land. Under considerable Zionist pressure, the UN recommended giving away 55% of Palestine to a Jewish state – despite the fact that this group represented only about 30% of the total population, and owned under 7 percent of the land.

“1947-1949 War: While it is widely reported that the resulting war eventually included five Arab armies, less well known is the fact that throughout this war Zionist forces outnumbered all Arab and Palestinian combatants combined – often by a factor of two to three. Moreover, Arab armies did not invade Israel – virtually all battles were fought on land that was to have been the Palestinian state.

“By the end of the war, Israel had conquered 78 percent of Palestine; three-quarters of a million Palestinians had been made refugees; over 500 towns and villages had been obliterated; and a new map was drawn up, in which every city, river and hillock received a new, Hebrew name, as all vestiges of the Palestinian culture were to be erased. For decades Israel denied the existence of this population, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once saying: ‘There were no such thing as Palestinians.’” . . .

“Largely due to special-interest lobbying, U.S. taxpayers give Israel an average of \$8 million per day, and since its creation have given more U.S. funds to Israel than to any other nation.^[17] As Americans learn about how Israel is using our tax dollars, many are calling for an end to this expenditure.”

4) [**"KEYNOTE ADDRESS: What I Would Tell a Visiting Congressional Delegation."**](#) *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*. May 2016, pp. 22-26.

“So many congressmen are coming over and the Israeli brainwashing machinery is so efficient that it will be very, very hard to compete with this machinery, but still I would like to try this time, at least virtually. The question that stands on the basis—or two main questions—are, first of all, do they know the truth? Because one can claim that they know the truth, they just ignore it or they don’t care about it, or they think that the truth, that the reality, is the right one. Or really, can we open their eyes by showing them the real truth, the reality, the backside of Israel, the backyard of Israel?

“And the second question—yesterday over dinner someone was mentioning the question, is American foreign policy in the Middle East based on interests or based on values? And I have my doubts about both. Therefore, to change this is a hell of a mission, but that’s the main source of hope for us, for people like me in the Middle East.” . . .

“I would take the American legislators to [a] few places just to show them and to trust their consciences. It’s enough to go for a few hours to Hebron, to the city of Hebron, and say no more. Just take them there. I never met an honest human being who had been to Hebron and didn’t come back after a few hours in shock. It is one thing to hear about those things; it’s another thing to see it and to experience it with your own eyes. And anyone who argues still that in the occupied territories the [Israeli] regime is not of an apartheid regime, just come to Hebron. Stay there a few

hours. And I want to meet one person who would tell me after visiting Hebron that this is not apartheid. But it looks like apartheid. It walks like apartheid. It behaves like apartheid. It is apartheid. Israel is not yet an apartheid state, but the regime there in the occupied territories cannot be defined but apartheid.” . . .

“The United States, the leader of the free world, the biggest and only superpower in the world, is now negotiating with Israel about foreign aid, the military assistance for the coming 10 years.

“First Israel said no, we think we’ll wait until the next president. This president is not good enough. Then they had second thoughts, because they start to think that Donald Trump might be unexpected. Might be unexpected. So maybe they will do a favor and maybe they are ready to discuss with the Obama regime about the coming 10 years. America is begging for Israel to accept a deal. It was until now \$3.4 billion [a year]. And I’m not very good in the details, but America is offering, if I understood well, \$4 billion a year for 10 years, \$40 billion. Israel wants \$5 billion. Israel is ready to compromise on \$4.5-\$4.3 billion a year. But if you look at the mechanism, if you look at the way it goes, you come again and again to the same question: for God’s sake, who is the superpower between the two? And who is in the pocket of whom here? [Applause]” . . .

“I believe that most of the American legislators, or at least a big part of them, know the truth. They know what is being done with their money. They know that the IDF, which is based so much on American money, and training and equipment above all, they know very well what is the use of this army. They know very well that the main role of this army, the most moral in the world, is being an occupier force, chasing after children, detaining children, shooting children on a daily basis. They know very well that with all the sophisticated bombs and submarines and air jets that Israel has, maybe the most sophisticated army in the world, by the end of the day it’s all about maintaining this occupation which no country in the world recognizes—even not Micronesia, Israel’s best friend after the United States. They know very well what use is being done and they support it, and they compete now one against the other [for] who will be more pro-Israeli than the other, and American society accepts it.”

5) ["GIDEON LEVY KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Questions & Answers."](#) *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*. May 2016, pp. 27-29.

Levy: . . . “I do believe that the problem in Israel is not the right-wingers and not the extremists. The problem is the mainstream, the mainstream who choose to close its eyes, the mainstream who wants to feel so good about itself, the mainstream who wants to show the beautiful face of Israel, how gay friendly we are, how we invented the cherry tomatoes, how we contributed so much to the international high-tech industry. Look how beautiful we are. We invented the *kibbutz*. And we have the most moral army in the world. Don’t you dare to think that it can be the second moral army in the world. It’s the most moral army in the world.

“Look at us. We are forced by those Arabs to do all those things. It’s not our choice. We are the victims. We live in fear. We live in the trauma of World War II. We live in the trauma of ’48. We live in the trauma of the missiles, and the trauma of the knife-holders, and the trauma of terror. And we are the happiest people in the world, number 11. After all those traumas and all those victimizations, number 11 in the world in happiness standards. Very strange. But in any case, the mainstream who decides to close his eyes, to ignore what’s happening in his backyard, this is the main problem.

Sprusansky: “A couple of questions on your description of the West Bank as an apartheid system. One person wants to know why you don’t extend that to Israel, given the violence in Jerusalem and other places. The second person would like to know, after all these years of apartheid and occupation, where is the hope?”

Levy: . . . “So, first of all, there is room for hope because many times the unexpected does happen, and many times it happens when you don’t expect it to happen. Like those huge trees, we are now in the cherry blossom season, but still you see from time to time a tree lies on the ground. It looks so healthy, so strong. What happened? And then if you look inside it, then you see it was totally rotten. And what is more rotten than the Israeli occupation? [Applause]

“But answering the first part of the question about apartheid, I always think that we should be very precise and not exaggerate, because things are bad enough without any exaggeration. Israel contains today three regimes. There is a kind of democracy for its Jewish citizens. There are cracks in this democracy, but still it is a democracy. I may be the best proof. My freedom of speech is until today—and I don’t take it for granted—is totally unlimited.

“There is the second regime, which is aimed at the Israeli-Palestinian citizens, who live in a democracy but are discriminated on any possible basis, but still gained formal civil rights. And then comes the third regime in the occupied territories, which can not be defined but as an apartheid regime, when two people share one piece of land and one person has all the rights in the world and the other one has no rights whatsoever. This is apartheid.

“And Israel is not yet an apartheid state. Israel has those three regimes, maybe the only country in the world not only without borders, but also with three regimes. It goes toward becoming an apartheid state, because it will not stay there. It doesn’t stay on the occupied territories. But right now I would define Israel according to its three regimes and not one regime.” . . .

. . . “Let me tell you, and maybe this will be my last sentence because you’re going to kick me out, I truly believe—and this comes back to the original issue, the original topic of today—really, I don’t know how knowledgeable are the American legislators. I know one thing. There’s not one single American legislator who can imagine himself what it means to live as a Palestinian under the occupation, under the Israeli occupation. [Applause] He cannot imagine himself one day of humiliation, of life danger, of daily lack of hope, despair, not having any chance for anything, being humiliated really on a daily basis. This is literally on a daily basis. Not knowing what does it mean to see the beaches which are half an hour away from your home, children who never saw those beaches.

“So there is not one single American legislator and very few Israelis, if at all, who can imagine themselves what it means to be today a Palestinian under this brutal occupation. And as long as this is the case, the chances for change are so small.” . . .

6) [“How Congress Shapes Middle East Policy, And How the American Israel Public Affairs Committee \(AIPAC\) Shapes Congress,”](#) by Professor Kirk J. Beattie. *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, May 2016, pp. 15-19.

Grant Smith: “Our next speaker, Kirk James Beattie, is the author of *Congress and the Shaping of the Middle East*, as well as two books on Egyptian politics, *Egypt During the Nasser Years* and *Egypt During the Sadat Years*. Professor Beattie is at Simmons College in the Political Science and International Relations Department, specializing in comparative politics with regional expertise in Middle East and West European politics. He’s taught at Harvard, Wellesley, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and the University of Michigan.” . . .

Kirk Beattie: . . . “Now I didn’t go in with the intention of focusing on AIPAC. I’ve been asked if I would focus a bit more on AIPAC for the purpose of this presentation. I’m very happy to do so. I will note, though, that of all the different organizations, lobbyists and so forth that were mentioned to me—and there was not a very long list of organizations that were mentioned to me by the staffers—the only one that came up consistently by every single staffer was that of AIPAC. Every single staffer, even if they’ve been there for a very short amount of time, was familiar with AIPAC. They’d been made aware of its existence from very early on, because people from AIPAC are highly professional, very, very quick to move in, and to introduce themselves and make themselves known, and to offer their assistance to people in the office, and knowing that maybe there’s a brand new person on the job in a particular office.

“AIPAC, I came to learn from others, was described in very positive terms by many, many people, but also as kind of the 800-pound gorilla by others, by a number of other people. I looked that up. There really aren’t 800-pound gorillas. The biggest gorillas only get to be 600 pounds or so. So if you take away anything of interest from this talk, at least you have that going for you. [Laughter]

“Now, how does AIPAC go about currying its influence? I’m narrowing the focus a bit now. It begins with elections and it begins very, very early. In fact, it begins before people are even running for Congress *per se*. AIPAC invests a lot

of effort, with the assistance of the JCRC groups that Grant was talking about earlier on at the community level, in scouting individuals and looking for rising stars on either side of the political aisle, to try to see whether somebody who's running for a municipal council in a major city or for some lower level job looks like he or she has the potential to rise up to be quite a bright promising—or is showing themselves as a bright promising political candidate who might over the longer run then be somebody who is interested in running for a congressional office." . . .

"Let me just finish, then, by saying that I think the question posed—Is AIPAC's influence, then, bad for America? What I learned along the way from the staffers—and, really, so much of the book is based, again, on these hundreds of interviews that I did with the staffers—is that you have people who are even Jewish-American staffers who are embarrassed by the power of AIPAC. You have many, many other staffers, including Jewish-American staffers, who are disgusted by the power of AIPAC. In over 30 years of teaching on this subject, not once ever have I in the classroom ever accused any of the members of Congress or any of the actors in the executive branch of having dual loyalties or of being treasonous. And yet I can tell you that I had interviews with people who are coming from both Republican and Democrat backgrounds who told me—again, anonymously, and deferred when I asked them to give me specific names—things like insert the name of any other country into the formula and any member of Congress for their behavior would be accused of treason. I'll conclude on that note."

NB. The Pro-Israel PAC Contributions to 2016 Congressional Candidates for NY Senator Schumer was \$46,400 with a career total of \$132,285; for NYS Representative Nita Lowey it was \$11,735 with a career total of \$235,623. For complete figures on all Congressional Candidates, please click : <http://www.wrmea.org/pdf/2016may-paccharts.pdf> Party Loyalty, Party Schmoalty—Israel Comes First, By Janet McMahon, on pages 79 to 82, in the Washington Report for May 2016.

See also Link A: [A Diplomatic and Military Perspective](#); Link B: [American Neoconservatives: A History and Overview](#); Link C: [CMEP Bulletin - Congressional Give and Take Over Israel-Palestine Strategy](#)

Other articles of interest:

A) ["A Diplomatic and Military Perspective," Col. Lawrence Wilkerson Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, May 2016, pp. 30-34.](#)

Does the unbiased policy of the U.S. toward this enclave jeopardize U.S. national security interest? You bet it does, big time. All we should ask, all I'm asking, all I asked for four years in the State Department, is that the American people be told the unvarnished truth and then decide if they're willing to do it.

B) ["American Neoconservatives: A History and Overview," Jim Lobe. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, May 2016, pp. 35-38.](#)

If I were asked to boil down neo-conservatism into its essential elements—that is, those that remained consistent over the past nearly 50 years—I would say the following: First, a Manichean view of the world in which good and evil are constantly at war and the United States has an obligation to lead the forces for good around the globe; second, a belief in the moral exceptionalism of both the United States and Israel, ... third, a conviction that, in order to keep evil at bay, the United States must have and be willing to exercise the military power necessary to defeat any and all challenges anywhere.... fourth, the 1930s—what with Munich, appeasement, Chamberlain, and then Churchill, the redeemer—taught us everything we need to know about evil and how to thwart it; and fifth, democracy is generally desirable.

C) [CMEP Bulletin - Congressional Give and Take Over Israel-Palestine Strategy, May 6, 2016](#)

Israel government supporters seek to block international efforts to promote negotiations aimed at ending the conflict. In mid-April House Members Nita Lowey (D-NY-17) [Editor's note: Maryknoll, N.Y. is in Congressional District 17] and Kay Granger (R-TX-12) circulated a letter to Secretary Kerry signed by almost the entire House of Representatives – 394 out of 435 Members – saying that a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should not be "imposed," and only the parties themselves, by themselves, can end their conflict through a negotiated

agreement. This view is a perennial “ask” by Israel’s largest lobby in Washington, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

- D) [Netanyahu's March of Folly Is Worthy of Putin, Haaretz Editorial May 15, 2016](#)
The Israeli prime minister wants to bring back military parades on Independence Day. He glorifies words and symbols at the expense of security.
- E) [As They Celebrate Independence, Israelis Should Remember the Nakba, Mira Sucharov, Haaretz, May 11, 2016](#)
Israelis should remember relative Palestinian powerlessness as they celebrate the achievement of their sovereign power. Despite the Israeli government’s attempt to legislate into silence any Palestinian national mourning through the 2011 Nakba Law, in most ways it’s hard to think of one narrative without the other. Israel’s founding constituted a moment of elation for Zionists just as it violently dislocated the Palestinians.
- F) [Israel Must Recognize Its Responsibility for the Nakba, the Palestinian Tragedy, Saeb Erekat, Haaretz, May 15, 2016](#)
For true reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians, Israel must recognize what it has done to the Palestinian people over the last 68 years. For the Palestinian people, the Nakba is a collective tragedy whose wounds have yet to heal 68 years later. What we Palestinians call the ‘Catastrophe’ is not just the destruction of at least 436 villages or the forced displacement of 70 percent of our people, but of our ethnic cleansing at the hands of a colonialist strategy.
- G) [When To Say Yes To \\$3.7 Billion, Michael J. Koplow, Israel Policy Forum, May 12, 2016](#)
One of the hallmarks of this relationship is currently in danger, and it is the annual military assistance that the U.S. provides to Israel. The current aid package is a ten year agreement that was signed in August 2007 and provides \$3 billion per year, which is about 20% of Israel’s annual defense spending.
- H) [CMEP Bulletin - When Optimism Fails - Why the Atlanta Church Summit Matters, May 13, 2016](#)
- I) [U.S. Takes Tougher Tone on Israeli Settlements in New Report, Matthew Lee, Bradley Klapper, Haaretz, May 7, 2016](#)
The U.S. approval of the harsh language marks a subtle shift. Washington has traditionally tempered statements by the so-called ‘Quartet’ of mediators with careful diplomatic language.
- J) [The Boycott of Israel Is No Miracle Drug, Aluf Benn, Haaretz, April 28, 2016](#)
A single state would bury both the Palestinian national movement and the Zionist vision. People who view the boycott as ‘saving Israel from itself’ might find themselves living in a Masada.
- K) [Boycott Is the Only Way to Stop the Israeli Occupation, Gideon Levy, May 01, 2016](#)
Aluf Benn’s proposal for Israel’s left to establish a base of domestic support for its positions is hopeless considering the brainwashing and increasing extremism of our society.
- L) [Gaza sewage crisis, festering in conflict, poisons coast, Fares Akram and Daniella Cheslow, \(AP\), Denver Post, May. 3, 2016](#)
Each day, millions of gallons of raw sewage pour into the Gaza Strip’s Mediterranean beachfront, spewing out of a metal pipe and turning miles of once-scenic coastline into a stagnant dead zone. The sewage has damaged Gaza’s limited fresh water supplies, decimated fishing zones, and after years of neglect, is now floating northward and affecting Israel as well.

- M) [Why the U.S. Jewish Establishment Won't Condemn the Israeli Occupation, Dov Waxman, Haaretz, May 2, 2016](#)
Unless more U.S. Jews who oppose the occupation become members of established Jewish organizations and donate money, the establishment is unlikely to heed calls of those who want it to condemn the occupation.
- N) [Most Israeli Jews think there's no occupation. So what is it?, Natasha Roth, 972 Mag. May 11, 2016](#)
A recent poll finds that 72 percent of Jewish Israelis believe Israel's control over the Palestinian territories does not constitute occupation. So what do you call military rule over a captive population that didn't vote for the army to be there?
- O) [PCBS: "Israel Controls More than 85% of the Land of Historical Palestine", Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics \(PCBS\), May 16, 2016](#)
This is a special statistical bulletin by the PCBS on the 68th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba of 1948. Israel Controls More than 85% of the Land of Historical Palestine. Nakba in literary terms means a natural catastrophe such as an earthquake, volcano, or hurricane. However, the Nakba in Palestine describes a process of ethnic cleansing in which an unarmed nation was destroyed and its population displaced to be replaced systematically by another nation.
- P) [Israel-Palestine: Questioning a Confederal Solution, Jeremy Pressman, Political Violence at a Glance, May 11, 2016](#)
Dahlia Scheindlin and Dov Waxman helpfully propose a different approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Rather than advocating for a two-state solution or one secular, democratic state, they propose a third alternative, a confederal solution (or here.) But like any other proposals for Israeli-Palestinian peace, a confederal approach has important vulnerabilities.