

Roadmap to Genocide

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Having lived for three years under Israeli military occupation in Palestine (1981-1984), I have been convinced that the daily violence and especially the contempt with which Israelis treat Palestinians meant that Israel intended ultimately to drive out and/or exterminate the indigenous people. This conviction has grown stronger over the years until now, as I watch the terrible fate of thousands of refugees in Gaza and the West Bank—people who have been driven in successive waves of massacre and land confiscation into ever smaller areas of the original land of Palestine—I am convinced that the state of Israel was designed from the beginning to exclude the original Arab inhabitants. Furthermore, it seems to me that discussions of the problem are useless if they begin with the assumption that we are dealing with two groups who are just having trouble accommodating themselves to sharing the same small piece of land, instead of seeing the conflict as a phase of massacre and ethnic cleansing by a colonial settler state engaged in an ongoing process of genocide against the indigenous people. If we look carefully at the genocide of the Native Americans, we see a parallel history: whole tribes driven farther and farther away from their original habitat, deprived of their use of the land, corralled into ever smaller and more remote “Reservations,” starved, hunted down, and finally exterminated. On the ticking clock of the cycle of total annihilation, the Palestinian people are approaching their Wounded Knee.

Unless we realize that Israel is engaged in genocide, all talk of a “peace process” merely screens the reality, and enables the genocide to continue. To give a contemporary example, either Condoleezza Rice is being disingenuous, or she is ignorant of the real Israeli agenda when she questions Israeli denial of entry to Palestinian-Americans (Merriman 2006). If Rice really understood the Israeli agenda, she would not need to ask. Worried that the Palestinian Arabs will soon outnumber Israeli Jews, Israel is using all methods to decrease the number of Arabs in the country, even refusing entry to Palestinian who returned to the country after the Oslo agreement to help build a Palestinian state side-by-side with Israel.

One of the Palestinians now excluded from the right to live in his native Palestine is Sam Bahour. His article “We Can’t Go Home Again” was posted on the *Electronic Intifada* and published in the NY Times, October 7, 2006. Bahour went back to live in his grandfather’s house in El-Bireh and to build up a telecommunications business worth US\$100 million which now employs more than 2,000 Palestinians. For thirteen years he has man-

aged to reside in the West Bank by going out to renew his visa every three months while getting an M.B.A. degree from Tel Aviv University, developing a 10 million dollar shopping mall, and starting a family. “Last month an Israeli soldier stamped my American passport with a one-month visa and wrote “last permit” on it in Arabic, Hebrew and English.” Bahour reports that in the last six years, more than 70,000 people have applied for permission to immigrate to the West Bank and Gaza to join family. “Their applications,” he says, “have either been denied or, like mine, languish” (Bahour 2000).

According to Israel Shahak, however, there will never be a Palestinian state. In *Jewish History, Jewish Religion* (2002) Shahak says Palestinians need not worry about being offered a “Bantustan” as long as Israel remains a “Jewish state” since Israel can never grant real sovereignty or autonomy to non-Jews within the land of Israel as long as it remains an exclusively Jewish state (Shahak 2002, 101).

Keeping such successful and highly desirable citizens as Sam Bahour out of Israel cannot be justified on grounds of “security,” and can only be understood as part of the ethnic cleansing in which Israel has been engaged since 1948. This ethnic cleansing no longer needs to be kept secret because Israel enjoys unquestioning support from the US, the world’s only superpower. This relatively non-violent practice of excluding returning Palestinians has an extremely violent counterpart: constant attacks against Palestinians especially in refugee camps, settler destruction of orchards and field crops, assassinations, house demolitions, massive check-points and now the Apartheid Wall.

A report issued by the Palestinian National Information Center (July 23, 2006) records numbing statistics: Since September 2000, the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, 4464 Palestinians have been killed including 826 children, and 47,440 injured. This Second Intifada takes its name from the highly provocative visit to the Haram al-Sharif by Ariel Sharon accompanied by some 5000 riot-helmeted Israeli police, a violation of Palestinian sacred space, a direct challenge to the cultural and religious rights of the Palestinian people. The report of the Second Intifada documents assaults on ambulance crews, hospitals, schools and universities, many closed by military order, and thousands of houses destroyed or damaged. While, the report concludes, “Israeli forces shelled residential neighborhoods thirty-six thousand and eight times” between October 1, 2001 and June 30, 2006. (Gaza-Ma’an 23/07/2006. See also

Factsheet, Sept. 12, 2006. <http://www.alawda.org/facts.html>).

Seen in its true light, the Israeli “demographic” agenda is perfectly compatible with such barbarous practices as stopping at checkpoints Palestinian mothers about to give birth, detaining them for hours so that they give birth in unsanitary and very public conditions. In these circumstances it is no wonder that such babies and mothers often die. Successive Israeli governments have been maniacally devoted to the idea of an exclusively Jewish state, admitting that this goal takes precedence over all ethical considerations. According to Nur Masalha, in *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians* (2000), influential Israeli writer Ora Shem-Ur advocates “dispossession and outright mass expulsion” of Arabs in order to keep Israel as a purely Jewish state (Masalha 187). Shem-Ur advocated exploiting war as an opportunity to “transfer” the Palestinians to “one of the fertile Crescent states” (Masalha 194). Only discourse which recognizes the genocidal nature of the Israeli policy has any possible chance of making sense of the trajectory of the history since long before 1948.

Today the genocidal intent of Israel toward the Palestinians seems to me so obvious that I am astonished every time I am reminded that this lethal intent is still invisible to or being denied by the world at large. One stunning example of such denial is evident in the responses of leading Democrats in the US to reports that former President Jimmy Carter’s forthcoming book entitled *Peace, Not Apartheid*, characterizes Israel (accurately) as an apartheid state. In a joint statement, Howard Dean, Nancy Pelosi and others Democratic leaders rushed to dissociate themselves from Carter’s views in an almost delusional assertion: “It is wrong to suggest that the Jewish people would support a government in Israel or anywhere else that institutionalizes ethnically based oppression, and Democrats reject that allegation vigorously” (Siegel 2006).

Few recent scholarly books on genocide make any mention of Palestine except as a footnote to the destination of the Jews fleeing the Nazis. One shining exception is Ward Churchill’s *A Little Matter of Genocide* (1997) in which this native American scholar speaks of Palestinian genocide in the most direct and unequivocal terms. Churchill sees Holocaust exclusivism as constructing “a conceptual screen behind which to hide the realities of Israel’s ongoing genocide against the Palestinian population whose rights and property were usurped in its very creation” (74). Churchill bases his discussion of genocide on the work of Raphael Lemkin, the pioneer of genocide studies.

Raphael Lemkin (1906-1959) was a brilliant Jewish Polish jurist who, as he tells us in an unfinished autobiography “Totally Unofficial Man,” grew up in a rural area of Lithuania shared by “the Poles, Russians (or rather White Russians), and the Jews” (Totten and Jacobs 368). He grew up convinced that there must be a law against the killing of people for their race or their religion (371).

That he was already striving for the condemnation of the crime of genocide as early as 1933 speaks volumes for the originality and prescience of Lemkin’s vision: “Hitler had already promulgated, at that time, his blueprint for destruction. Many people thought he was bragging, but I believed that he would carry out his program if permitted. Now was the time to establish a system of collective security for the life of the peoples” (372). Several features in his work should be emphasized here: the first is that Lemkin saw clearly the genocidal potential of Hitler’s program *before the killing had actually started*. The second is that Lemkin’s concern was always inclusive: he encompassed all people, not only his own group, in his passion to protect human life. In addition Lemkin was always concerned for the spiritual and cultural as well as the physical existence of the human being (372).

As he relates it in the autobiography, on September 6, 1939, Lemkin was forced to flee Warsaw. Nazi armies had attacked Poland and an order was issued for all able-bodied men to leave Warsaw immediately. Lemkin recounts the terrifying journey, his last visit to his family (whom he would never see again), and the vicissitudes that took him to a safe haven at Duke University in the US. One of the stopovers on this flight was Riga where he visited the famous historian Professor Simon Dubnov who concurred with Lemkin’s conviction that “Obviously if killing one man is a crime, killing of entire races and peoples must be an even greater one. (377). Lemkin records that only a year and one-half after this visit, his friend Dubnov, the brilliant Jewish historian, was led to his execution by the Nazis (378).

In an Editor’s Note, Totten and Jacobs add to the unfinished autobiography the following information: Lemkin’s crowning achievement—the United Nations Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide—was successfully ratified in the UN in 1948, but would only later, under U.S. President Ronald Reagan, be affirmed by his adopted country almost four decades after his death (399).

In *A Little Matter of Genocide*, Churchill applies Lemkin’s definition of genocide to the case of Palestine seeing Israeli occupation and dispossession as an assault on Palestinian cultural and physical existence. Agreeing with Lemkin’s view that the total annihilation of a group as exceptional rather than as the essential mark of genocide, Churchill rejects the exclusivist reading of Lemkin’s definition of genocide as applicable only to case of the Jews. Churchill points out that Holocaust exclusivist Stephen Katz has completely misrepresented Lemkin’s ideas (51n). In claiming that only the Jewish case can be called genocide, Churchill says, Katz denies all other cases of genocide (33n); denies the Bosnian genocide (53n); denies the genocide of the American Indians (138, 157-9) and with it the Pequod genocide (73n).

Lemkin says in *Axis Rule*:

Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone after removal of the population and colonization of the area by the oppressor's own nationals. (*Axis Rule* 82, quoted by Churchill 68)

In the case of Palestine, the Nakbah of 1948 and the devastating “ethnic cleansing” of 1967 belong to the first phase, “destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group,” while the wholesale importation of Jews from all around the world represents the second phase, though both phases have occurred and continue to occur simultaneously and incrementally. As Churchill insists, for Lemkin, the actual physical annihilation of every single member of a group is not the only or necessary characteristic of genocide, in support of which he quotes another passage in *Axis Rule* where Lemkin says:

Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a *coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.* (...) The objectives of such a plan would be a disintegration of political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. (*Axis Rule*, 79, quoted by Churchill, 70) (Emphasis added)

Both elements of this definition fit the Palestinian situation as Ward Churchill shows in the context in which he explains the motive for the “exclusivist position”. Stephen Katz, Churchill argues, interprets Lemkin’s theory as vindication for his own view that no other people has been subjected to the fate of the Jews, and therefore finds it impossible to use the term “Holocaust” for any except Jewish suffering. Churchill says:

The factors motivating exclusivists [...] concern the agenda of establishing a ‘truth’ which serves to compel permanent maintenance of the privileged political status of Israel, the Jewish state established on Arab land in 1947 as an act of international atonement for the Holocaust; to forge a secular reinforcement, based on the myth of unique suffering, of Judaism’s theological belief in itself as comprising a ‘special’ or ‘chosen’ people, entitled to all the prerogatives of such; and to construct a *conceptual screen behind which to hide the realities of Israel’s ongoing genocide against the Palestinian population whose rights and property were usurped in its very creation.* (Churchill 73-74; emphasis added)

Lemkin’s inclusive definition sees genocide as “a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups” (*Axis Rule* 79). Applying this definition of genocide, it becomes obvious that the Palestinian people are undergoing a gradual but radical removal from historic Palestine and being replaced by the Jewish people. As Nur Masalha says, “In Israel proper, after four and a half

decades of seizure and appropriation of land, Zionist state institutions are now in absolute control of nearly 93 percent of the land, while nearly half the land in the West Bank and a third of the land of the Gaza Strip have already been taken over by the state and allocated to Jewish settlement” (191).

Another earlier and equally forthright statement of the Palestinian genocide is Edward Said’s *The Question of Palestine* (1971). Though he does not use the term “genocide,” Said documents from the perspective of their victims, the intentions of Zionists from the beginning, starting with Theodor Herzl’s statement in his 1895 *Diaries* that

We shall have to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries whilst denying it any employment in our own country. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly. (Said 1979, 1992, 13)

Jonathan Cook quotes another statement of policy variously attributed to Ben Gurion and/or Joseph Weitz, Director of the Jewish National Fund’s Land Department:

It must be clear that there is no room in the country for both peoples. (...) There is no way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries, to transfer all of them, save perhaps for Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the old Jerusalem. Not one village must be left, not one tribe. The transfer must be directed at Iraq, Syria, and even Transjordan. For this goal funds will be found. (1940, qtd in Cook 2006, 97)

Among the few Zionists to have faced the reality that Palestine was already populated and its fields cultivated, as Jonathan Cook points out, was Asher Ginsberg, known as Ahad Ha’am (1852-1927) “who observed in 1891 after a trip to Palestine, “We abroad used to believe that the Land of Israel is now almost totally desolate, a desert that is not sowed... But in truth this is not the case. Throughout the country it is difficult to find fields that are not sowed” (qtd by Cook, 2000, 111). In *Beyond Innocence and Redemption* (1990), Marc Ellis says that Ahad Ha’am favored the peaceful gathering of Jews in a Palestinian homeland, but forbade the humiliation or dispossession of the Arabs. Ahad Ha’am died, according to Marc Ellis, “brokenhearted” in Tel Aviv in 1927, “My God, is this the end? ... that we come to Zion and stain its soil with innocent blood?” (Ellis 46).

Ellis speaks of another important Jewish leader, Judah Magnes (1877-1948) who advocated a Jewish educational, moral, and religious center in Palestine, but not the development of an imperial state in which Jews would be the majority and deprive the Arabs of their rights and their land by force. According to Ellis, Magnes said, “Palestine does not belong to the Jews and it does not belong to the Arabs, nor to Judaism or Christianity or Islam. It belongs to all of them together; it is the Holy Land” (Ellis 49). Like Magnes who favored

a “bi-national state,” Hannah Arendt argued against a Jewish state, insisting that Jewish immigration should be limited, and envisioning a country in which “Local self-government and mixed Jewish-Arab municipal and rural councils, on a small scale and as numerous as possible,” would provide a viable model for co-existence (Ellis 53-55). But it was not these humane and ethical Jewish leaders whose voices would prevail in Israel’s formation. It was the xenophobic imperialists who would ultimately seal the fate of Israel, men for whom the supreme good became not Jewish ethics and culture but Jewish survival. For Ben-Gurion, Jabotinsky, Menachem Begin, Barak, Netanyahu, Ariel Sharon, and Ehud Olmert who were willing to use force to drive out the indigenous population, the new Jewish god was the survival of the Jews, and they would parley Jewish suffering under Hitler into a *cause celebre* to justify every barbarism required for ethnic cleansing to achieve that goal. As Hannah Arendt foresaw, under these aggressive militarists, the Jewish Homeland would be sacrificed for a Jewish State. Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht says, speaking of the support given by secularized Jewish Americans to this new muscular Israeli state, “Zionism would become the new religion of the American Jews, and Israel would be their new God. Which is why opposition to Zionism or criticism of Israel is now heresy and cause for excommunication” (130).

In an essay entitled “How to Answer Palestine’s Challenge” (1988), Edward W. Said summed up the history of Palestine succinctly:

Since 1948, Israel’s policy has been to eliminate all traces of Palestinian national life, to treat the Palestinians not as a people but as a bunch of inconsequential nomads who could be driven out, killed, or ignored, regarding them as subhuman coolies whose life, property, and national rights could be trampled underfoot. By 1950, vast amounts of Arab land in Palestine, now Israel, were expropriated arbitrarily or consigned to a Jewish authority which safeguarded the land in perpetuity for ‘the Jewish people.’ (Said 1988. 14)

According to Raphael Lemkin’s definition, this passage from Said perfectly describes the process of genocide against the Palestinian people.

Since 1988 things have gotten even worse, largely because of the disastrous Oslo Accords which did nothing to protect Palestinian’s rights to their land and nothing to restrict Jewish settlement. A huge Separation/Apartheid Wall is snaking across Palestine, built mostly on the Palestinian side of the Green Line on land occupied by Israel in 1967, taking in strategic hill tops, fertile land, and water resources. This monstrous towering wall that divides Palestinians from their fields, from their families, schools, and medical care, threatens to become the permanent border between Israel and isolated Bantustans on a fraction of the land of Palestine. Furthermore, Israel is employing a scorched earth policy to denude the whole area of its vegetation as a tactic in war. By as early as 1989, so many olive trees in the Nablus area had been cut down or bulldozed by the

Israeli military and settlers that the only way to maintain the 200-year-old al-Sha’aka olive soap factory in Nablus was to import olives from Italy.

Looking at Palestine today, an observer unfamiliar with its history might think it had always been a barren desert. In fact the region was for centuries carefully cultivated in harmony with its semi-arid climate. In his *Life At the Crossroads: A History of Gaza*, journalist Gerald Butt quotes the medieval writer Masude (who wrote in 943) as saying that orange trees from India had been brought to the Syrian, Palestinian, and Egyptian coasts in 912 (Butt 82). Butt continues: “The Arab geographer Dimashqi (writing in 1300) said of Gaza, ‘It is a city so rich in trees ... as to be like a cloth of brocade spread out on the sand’ (98), and he quotes Muqadisi (born in Jerusalem in 946) as saying of commerce in the area of Syria that included Palestine:

The trade of Syria is considerable. From Palestine come olives, dried figs, raisins, the carob-fruit, stuffs of mixed silk and cotton, soap and kerchiefs. Unequaled is this land of Syria for its dried figs, its common olive oil, its white bread [...] for the quinces, the pine nuts called “kurai bite [snober],” the Ainuni and Duri raisins, the Theriack antidote [...] the herb of mint and the rasaires of Jerusalem. And further know that within the province of Palestine may be found [...] six and twenty products that are not found thus united in any other land. Of these the first seven are found in Palestine alone [...] pine-nuts [...] the quince, the fig called al-Saba’ and the fig of Damascus. The next seven are the water lily, the sycamore, the carob or St. John’s bread (locust tree), the lotus fruit, the artichoke, the sugar cane, and the Syrian apple. (82)

Evidently, then, Palestine has not always been a neglected desert, as some contemporary Zionists claim. The present devastation of the ecosystem in Palestine is deliberate, a tactic of war—a systematic scorched earth policy designed to starve and drive out the indigenous population. Israel has destroyed hundreds of wells and cisterns in Gaza and the West Bank, bulldozed or burned orchards, greenhouses, and fields on the pretext that their own national security requires that the “cover” for insurgents (“terrorists”) be destroyed. Actually, by depriving Palestinians of the means to feed themselves, Israel makes them a captive market forced to pay extortionate prices to purchase Israeli produce.

Evidence that the Israeli destruction of the eco-system is part of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians is offered by a French observer, Christian Salmon, founder of *The International Writers’ Parliament*, who after visiting Palestine in 2002, wrote “The Bulldozer War”. In this moving article Salmon expresses his shock at the sheer destruction of some of the most universally known and revered landscapes in the world, noting that the corresponding process in Bosnia was known as “memoricide.” In Palestine this “slashing and plundering” is being done, he says, by an Israel “striving to erase the past”:

Over the decades the Israelis have abandoned the utopia of the kibbutzes for the atopia, the nowhere, of the settlements. People were fond of saying in the 1960s that they tried to make the desert bloom and the kibbutz exerted a powerful appeal. Since then the biblical garden has become a desert, a wasteland, a battlefield.

The bulldozers on the roadsides are the troubling acknowledgement of this. The key question is not the one posed by Kafka—"What must we do to live?"—since the goal here is not living, but dislodging and destruction. This is the first war to be waged with bulldozers. This is an attempt at deterritorialisation without historical precedent. This is total warfare that targets the civilian population and the land. This is war [...] seeking not the division of territory but its abolition. (10)

Salmon looked at Palestine without a pro-Zionist ideological bias and, though he does not use the term here, what he describes is the genocidal assault on the essentials for life of a community and thus directed towards the annihilation of a people and its culture. In this respect, Salmon differs from the generality of analysts and commentators on the Palestine/Israel conflict. Most Western observers have been deluged with decades of pro-Israeli propaganda from pulpits, newspapers, and film, especially since 1967, as Norman Finkelstein has shown in *The Holocaust Industry* (2000). If the observer thus favorably pre-disposed approaches the problem giving Israel the benefit of the doubt, he will see the conflict as merely a case of two neighbors who have trouble getting along and advising them that they must both make compromises, the basic injustice of the situation is elided. He will further be inclined to have assimilated together with the pro-Israel propaganda, the racist assumption that the Palestinians are less important than the Jews, even as barbaric and (since 9/11) even as terrorists.

Such a prejudiced observer, then, will be unlikely to see what is essential: i.e. that Israel is a colonial-settler state and thus by definition geared to the extermination of the indigenous people. In his important book, *Israel: Colonial Settler State?* (1993), Maxime Rodinson answers his own question in the affirmative, though his evaluative conclusions are disappointingly sanguine since he fails to suggest that anything needs to be done about the fact that Israel is a genocidal state. In spite of his Marxist credentials, Rodinson seems to accept the inevitability that the "fittest" will prevail, a racist premise intrinsic to Social Darwinism. Nevertheless, Rodinson's book goes a long way to establishing that Israel is a colonial settler state, the variety of colonialism characterized by the importation of a foreign population into an area with the subjection and then annihilation and/or dispersal of the indigenous population, it is not a huge leap to say such a settler colony is intrinsically genocidal. Such a conclusion is implied by Peter Buch who, in his *Introduction* to Rodinson's book, remarks: "It is (...) incredible that the colonial-settler character of Israel has not been widely recognized by world public opinion, even among those who normally sympathize with the colonially oppressed."

(18).

Even such an acute and sympathetic observer as Sara Roy, an Israeli economist who has studied Gaza closely cannot quite bring herself to call Israel's policy toward the Palestinians by its right name. In "Living With the Holocaust" (2002), she comes tantalizingly close to the truth—but stops just short, perhaps because she adopts the "Holocaust Exclusivist" position of scholars like Stephen Katz so well described by Ward Churchill. Even though Roy lists the atrocities of dispersion, dispossession, torture, land confiscation, illegal settlement, etc., she nonetheless concludes: "Israel's occupation of the Palestinians is not the moral equivalent of the Nazi genocide of the Jews. But it does not have to be. No this is not genocide, but it is repression, and it is brutal" (09.12.2002). Such a disclaimer is regrettable in light of Roy's recent article entitled "The Gaza Economy" (in *Palestine Information Center Brief* #143, 2 Oct. 2006), in which she uses the term "pauperization" to describe Gaza's economy of which she says "the pauperization of Gaza's economy is not accidental but deliberate," and agrees with the Israeli Human Rights group B'tselem that the Israeli destruction of Gaza's only power plant is a war crime, she still cannot bring herself to use the term "genocide" though the policy she describes clearly qualifies for inclusion in the definition of genocide articulated by Raphael Lemkin.

Unlike Sara Roy, Israeli academic Ilan Pappé has no hesitation in using the term "genocide" when speaking of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. In a recent article entitled "Genocide in Gaza," Pappé declares: "A genocide is taking place in Gaza," citing the murders of three children in Gaza and a whole family wounded in Beit Hanoun, commenting that "This is the morning reap [sic], before the end of the day many more will be massacred" (*The Electronic Intifada* 2 Sept. 2006).

Another commentator who does not hesitate to call Israeli policy toward the Palestinians by its right name is Argentinian Adrian Salbuchi. In an article entitled "Historical Lies as an Instrument of Domination," (2006), Salbuchi takes issue with the official interpretation of the Holocaust, approving of the critical approach to the subject by Norman Finkelstein in *The Holocaust Industry* (2000). Salbuchi says:

The interesting point is that Finkelstein is part of a growing breed of historians, journalists, intellectuals and large sectors of international public opinion which does not meekly accept the Holocaust Dogma propagated by the private power centres of the New World Order... This large sector of intellectually independent people believe that the 'Holocaust Industry'—as Finkelstein aptly describes it—is shamelessly used not only to steal public and private moneys around the world for the benefit of the State of Israel, but also to justify the *constant acts of genocide and aggression* perpetrated by Israel against the captive Palestinian people to this very day. (Salbuchi 2006, emphasis added)

The ultimate intention of the Jewish state is to anni-

hilate or “transfer” the indigenous population is a fact that the Palestinians have always known and what a growing number of observers are beginning to realize: Israel does not want peace with the Palestinians. On the contrary, it wishes to provoke resistance in order to provide an excuse for violently putting it down and confiscating more land in the process. In her excellent book *The Fate of the Jews* (1984), Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht expresses this insight very well: “Zionists executed the psychological coup of the century by taking Palestine from the Arabs and then pretending Jews were Arab victims” (246-47).

When the threat of peace lifts its ugly head, Israel strikes out violently, demolishing more houses, shelling another refugee camp, bulldozing another orchard, confiscating more land, imprisoning and torturing more Palestinians. So great is the number of Palestinians imprisoned and tortured that their number approaches that of the “Pipeline” system used by the British in Kenya against the Kikuyu to break the spirit and bring about the subjection of a people who were resistant to being incorporated into the colonial economic system. A recent report estimates that over 25% of the entire Palestinian population has been in prison, including some 9 to 12 thousand at the present time, in addition to uncounted numbers held in secret prisons inaccessible to Red Cross, lawyers, or families. In her book *Britain’s Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (2005), Caroline Elkins explains how, using this “Pipeline” system, the British colonial authorities rounded up and detained in squalid barbed-wire concentration camps the entire Kikuyu population, segregating men from their families, putting women and children in equally ghastly enclosures, in all of which slave labor and indoctrination were enforced by beatings, starvation, and torture. Prisoners were rounded up indiscriminately, held without charge or any legal appeal, classified according to the degree of their commitment to Mau Mau, and then the necessary degree of violence applied to either exact cooperation or, in the case of the unbreakable resisters, to inflict torture including castration and finally death. Almost the entire Kikuyu people had bound themselves to resist the loss of their lands and their freedom through a series of oaths, and it was the purpose of the “Pipeline” to break this solidarity and ultimately to break the will of the entire people (Elkins 111, 120, 237). As the West Bank and Gaza have become increasingly gigantic concentration camps, the resemblance of the Palestinian plight to that of the native Kenyans under the “Pipeline” of the British colonial authorities becomes ever more apparent. Like the Kikuyu, some Palestinians resist the most extreme torture even to death. Israel has adopted an even more barbaric alternative to imprisonment and torture by simply assassinating “wanted” Palestinians, saving the trouble of arrest and internment.

Therefore we can only be surprised at the increasing level of Israeli violence if we assume that Israel wants

peace with its Arab neighbors. The increasing conflict makes perfect sense, however, if we realize that Israel has always intended to bring about an exclusively Jewish state from which its indigenous population has been purged. As the screws are tightened to force the Palestinians out, resistance increases. As the Palestinians disappear behind walls, their leaders into prisons or cemeteries, as the mass media devotes less attention to their sufferings making them invisible to the outside world, as the remaining area of Palestinian habitation gets smaller, the resistance necessarily becomes more frantic, and correspondingly the violence used to quell it becomes more brutal. Even the homemade rockets flung across the border into southern Israel are more like smoke signals from behind a high wall, not that they do much damage but that they signify “We are still here and we are resisting!” Or in the words of the Stevie Smith poem, they are “not waving but drowning.”

Since 1967, the West, especially the US, contributes billions yearly to the Israeli military build-up including nuclear weapons. As Western/US financial and moral support for Israel has increased, Western/US support for the Palestinians has decreased. Since all resistance has been criminalized, those who resist must be silenced, demonized, discredited. This withdrawal of support has reached its most extreme form in recent months since Israel has imprisoned leaders of the democratically elected Hamas government and closed all entrances to Gaza and to West Bank towns, villages, and refugee camps. Meanwhile the Bush Administration has enacted legislation making it a crime to send money to the Palestinians. International banks now refuse to execute any attempted transfer of funds even to starving individuals, much less organizations.

The policy of starvation and isolation of the Palestinians is not new though its present form is perhaps the most extreme of any time in the history of Israel. One of the primary purposes of the First Gulf War (that of Bush Sr.) was to ethnically cleanse the thousands of Palestinian guest workers from the Gulf, though it was Palestinian labor and expertise that built and enriched the Gulf. These workers provided support for their families in the Occupied Territories, thus enabling these families to survive the austerities of the Occupation. Consequently, under US auspices, Kuwait set up centers for interrogation and torture of Palestinians, over-seen by American officers, and Palestinians lost their residence permits and were forced to leave. Jordan absorbed thousands of such displaced Palestinian professionals. Without the income from their sons working in the Gulf, Palestinians under Occupation were less independent and suffered a severe decrease in their standard of living. In summarizing Palestinian losses in Kuwait, Robert Fisk speaks of “the killing of hundreds of Palestinians in Kuwait and the ‘ethnic cleansing’ of tens of thousands of others by the Kuwaitis that followed the war” (Fisk 786).

Similarly in 1982, Ariel Sharon, with the approval and support of the US, finding that the PLO in Lebanon were actually keeping the cease fire though Sharon used severe provocations to goad them into military retaliation, decided he had to invade Lebanon to avoid having to negotiate with the Palestinians. He claimed that this invasion (which he called “Peace for Galilee”) was necessary “to stop the rockets from raining down on the northern settlements.” In fact the opposite was the case: he had to invade because rockets were NOT raining down on the Galilee. The 1982 invasion was designed to eliminate the PLO and to exterminate as many Palestinians in the refugee camps of Lebanon as possible in order to protect the illegal settlements by preventing the original inhabitants from ever returning to their homes. Insight into the agonies endured by the Palestinians who were ethnically cleansed from the Galilee in 1948 are vividly depicted in the stunning new novel by Elias Khoury, *The Gate of the Sun* (2005), while the ethnic cleansing of Ramallah, Lydda, Ramleh, and Tel a-Termos can be vicariously experienced in works like *Scattered Like Seeds* (1989) by Shaw Dallal, *On the Hills of God* (1989) by Ibrahim Fawal, and Ghassan Kanafani’s *Men in the Sun* and *The Land of Sad Oranges* (1963). A detailed eye-witness account of the massacres and ethnic cleansing at Lydda is now on the Internet: see “A Reply to Amos Kennan’s “The Legacy of Lydda”: Interview with George Habash” by A. Clare Brandabur. www.ipsc.ie

The principal Palestinian demand in all negotiations has been the right of return of the refugees. Not only is this their legal right under International Law, this was also the condition of UN recognition of Israel, a condition which Aza Eban swore (falsely) would be carried out. The refugees have never been allowed to return. Those who tried to return were imprisoned or shot. Thus UN recognition of Israel should long since have been rescinded.

The plan to eliminate the Palestinians inside 1948 Israel as well as in the Occupied Territories has not gone away. On the contrary it is very much on the agenda. In his recent book, *Blood and Religion* (2006), Jonathan Cook quotes Benny Morris, (one of the new Israeli revisionist historians who exposed without condemning the frankly ethnocidal policies of the Israeli founding fathers), in an interview with *The Guardian* as saying that he regards as a mistake the failure of Zionist pre-state leaders to complete the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population. Cook says, “The 150,000 Palestinians of 1948 had become the more than one million Israeli Arabs of today,” a group to which Morris refers as a “time bomb.” Morris said further according to Cook:

The place would be quieter and know less suffering if the matter had been resolved once and for all ... because Ben Gurion did not complete the transfer in 1948. Because he left a large and volatile demographic reserve in the West Bank and Gaza and within Israel itself.. [BenGurion] made a serious historical mistake in 1948. Even though he understood the demographic

issue and the need to establish a Jewish state without a large Arab minority, he got cold feet during the war. In the end he faltered ... I know that this stuns the Arabs and the liberals and the politically correct types. . . . because Ben Gurion did not complete the transfer in 1948. (Cook 2006, 107)

Obviously, then, Israel is a colonial settler state founded with the full intention of ridding itself opportunistically of the indigenous Palestinian population. All of Israeli history is the incremental carrying out of this grand design. One reason why some observers have difficulty in recognizing the genocidal nature of Israel is that, compared with other universally recognized cases of genocide—such as that of the Bosnian Muslims, the European Jews at the hands of Nazi Germany, or the genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda—there is a difference in the time-line. Each of the genocides just mentioned took place within a fairly well-defined period of time. From the beginning the Israelis tried to proceed secretly, since they were afraid of opposition and therefore loss of financial support from European and American authorities if their genocidal intent became too obvious. Therefore in the case of Palestine, the whole process of ethnic cleansing and extermination of the Palestinians could be said to have started under the British Mandate in the 1930s and continues to this moment. The Israeli genocide of the Palestinians is taking place inexorably over a time-line of some fifty five years, though of late its tempo has been speeding up dramatically.

Among the most troubling aspects of US support for Israeli genocide is the role of Christian Zionists who regard the slaying of the present-day Amelekites as perfectly legitimate since it is mandated by the Biblical Yahwah. Several recent studies offer insights into this phenomenon; space permits mention of only a few of them here. The late Rev. Michael Prior raises the question how Christians can regard Old Testament commands to genocide as consistent with a loving, merciful and universal God (in *The Bible and Colonialism: A Moral Critique* (1997). Fuad Sha’ban discloses the primordial Zionism of early American founding fathers (including Christopher Columbus!) and traces the astonishing history of Zionism in the Evangelical Protestant churches of America in *For Zion’s Sake: The Judeo-Christian Tradition in American Culture* (2005). And Rev. Charles Carlson has traced the Evangelical obsession with “end times”, Armageddon, and the in-gathering of the Jews in Palestine to the insinuation into the King James Bible of commentaries, derived largely from the theology of John Nelson Darby, designed to carry a Zionist message. In “How Zionists Changed Biblical Interpretations Using Scofield and Oxford University in 1908,” Carlson demonstrates that *The Scofield Reference Bible* was annotated by forger Cyrus Scofield, a disciple of John Nelson Darby, apparently at the behest of Zionists whose goal, according to Carlson, was “to create a subculture around a new worship icon, the modern State of Israel, a state

that did not yet exist” (Carlson 4). This Bible, which has been re-issued several times with significant modifications to the original annotations, is used extensively by such Evangelists as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Oral Roberts, and it is the Zionism of the *Scofield Reference Bible* that emerges to dictate uncritical acceptance of Israeli policy, including the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Palestinian people which they see as part of the Divine Plan (Sha’ban 161-209). Thus the Palestinians have been disaffected from an important segment of American Christians who might theoretically have been expected to oppose genocide in the Holy Land, and who instead have been brain-washed into regarding Israel as a sacred icon that can do no wrong.

Numerically the greatest slaughter of Palestinians occurred in 1948 when, according to Benny Morris, at least 24 massacres took place and this may yet be an under-estimation. In fact the late Palestinian statesman Saleh Baransi of Tayibih, (unpublished interview 1983), questioned about Deir Yassein and other massacres, told me that “every village had its massacres.” Jonathan Cook quotes Morris as saying:

In Operation Hiram [in October 1948, in the country’s northern Palestinian heartland] there was an unusually high concentration of executions of people against a wall or next to a wall in an orderly fashion. That can’t be chance. It’s a pattern. Apparently, various officers who took part in the operation understood that the expulsion order they received permitted them to do these deeds in order to encourage the population to take to the roads ...Ben-Gurion silenced the matter. He covered up for the officers who did the massacres. (Morris qtd. by Cook 2006. 112)

An important source of information about the genocidal practice of the Israelis in 1967 is *The Unholy Land* (1970-1971) by Arthur C. Forrest. Forrest was sent by Christian Canadian colleagues to examine rumors that the Israelis were not in fact allowing the refugees back in to Palestine, in spite of their carefully staged claims to the contrary. Forrest quickly learned that refugees were still fleeing across the Allenby Bridge; that many had been attacked by Israeli planes using napalm; that the camp at Jericho which had held some 65,000 refugees from 1948, had been attacked and thousands driven across the River into Jordan by napalm; that survivors from the Jordanian Army said whole field hospitals had been napalmed.

One of the horror stories being told in Amman was of the experiences of fleeing refugees being sprayed with napalm. At first I didn’t believe it and shuddered at the thought of using some of the pictures of victims available in Jordan. ‘If it were pictures of Vietnam you’d publish them wouldn’t you?’ a Palestinian said. (Forrest 16)

Forrest was shocked and dubious concerning these reports, so he went to visit survivors of these attacks in Jordanian hospitals. He spoke to Mr. Sami Oweida, the father of a family who had recently crossed the

Bridge and whose surviving members were still being treated in hospital in Amman

We crossed the King Hussein [Allenby] Bridge, walking. Planes were going overhead [...] We tried to avoid big crowds, thinking the planes would bomb the crowds. Then at that moment [about 4 PM] I saw a plane come down like a hawk directly at us. We threw ourselves on the ground and found ourselves in the midst of fire. (Forrest 17)

Forrest also quotes the report of General Sir John Glubb whose interpretation of the Middle East Crisis was published in July 1967 as follows:

The greater part of the Jordan army were destroyed by napalm [...] Glubb quotes from a signed statement by a team of doctors from the American University of Beirut. [...] ‘A doctor reported that the Mobile Field Hospital, containing 350 patients, was incinerated with all its patients and staff by napalm,’ Glubb says. (Forrest 16)

Forrest took photographs of some of the burned victims, one of which he later published in the *United Church Observer*, his Church paper in Canada, of a little girl recovering from napalm burns. “That, I was told, proved I was anti-Semitic. To condemn napalm in Vietnam is alright. To report its use by the Israelis is considered anti-Semitic” (Forrest 17). When Forrest asked for permission to visit the three destroyed villages Yalu, Beit Nuba, and Emmaus, he was refused on grounds that “There isn’t any Beit Nuba!” (15). Nevertheless Forrest managed to travel to the devastated area. From survivors whom he asked about the destruction of these villages in retribution for their resistance in 1948 he learned that Israeli bulldozers demolished houses over the heads of the infirm elderly who perished in the rubble (15).

Now it is possible to reconstruct a more complete picture of the Israeli cover-up including its attack on the USS Liberty. The well planned war of 1967 was designed to take as much land as possible and to make it appear that the Arab armies had attacked Israel. This is the startling conclusion of a more recent book by James Bamford, *Body of Secrets* (2002) which offers a more detailed explanation for the Israeli attack on the Liberty. Bamford provides a mass of detail about the “criminal slaughter” in which the Israelis were engaged at nearby Al-Arish (201).

From the first minutes of its surprise attack, the Israeli airforce had owned the skies over the Middle East. Within the first few hours, Israeli jets pounded twenty-five Arab air bases ranging from Damascus in Syria to an Egyptian field, loaded with bombers far up the Nile at Luxor. Then, using machine guns, mortar fire, tanks, and air power, the Israeli war machine overtook the Jordanian section of Jerusalem as well as the west bank of the Jordan River, and torpedo boats captured the key Red Sea cape at Sharm al-Sheikh.

In the Sinai, Israeli tanks and armored personnel carriers pushed toward the Suez Canal along all three of the roads that crossed the desert, turning the burning sands into a massive killing field. One Israeli general estimated that

Egyptian casualties there ranged from 7,000 to 10,000 killed, compared with 275 of its own troops. (201)

Bamford documents the attack by Israeli tanks on a UN convoy of Indian peacekeeper soldiers on their way to Gaza, and the subsequent attack on a UN headquarters in Gaza in which fourteen UN members were killed. "One Indian officer called it deliberate, cold-blooded killing of unarmed UN soldiers" (201). Bamford then details the slaughter of hundreds of Egyptian prisoners of war who were made to dig their own graves and then machine-gunned (202-205). *Body of Secrets* provides the most detailed account I have seen of the USS Liberty attack, gleaned in part from all available records, some recently released unearthed from the records of the National Security Agency, and from interviews with all available Liberty survivors.

It was not in Israel's interest to have its aggression against Egypt, Syria, and Jordan revealed to the world. Equally Israel wanted to hide its war crimes and ethnic cleansing, especially since the Americans had supplied the cryptographers whose expertise enabled the destruction of the Egyptian Air Force. Early in the afternoon of June 8, 1967, Israeli jets and missile boats opened fire on the USS Liberty, an American surveillance ship operating off the coast of Gaza. Struck by rockets, cannons and torpedoes, the vessel suffered extensive damage and over 200 casualties. Israeli forces were then engaged in the fourth day of what would soon be called the Six Day War, and, as James Bamford shows, the Liberty was hit repeatedly by waves of Israeli airforce fighters loaded with 30 mm cannon ammunition, rockets, and even napalm, then assaulted from the sea by torpedoes (200-201). Though Israel claimed the attack was a "tragic mistake," the incident has never been fully revealed to the public.

If the motive for this attack was to hide the war crimes being committed against the Arabs, it seems to have worked, since very few people in the West even today know what Israel was doing. In subsequent investigations, however, it has emerged that those directly connected to the attack on the Liberty rejected Israeli claims the ship was attacked by accident. In his biography of President Lyndon Johnson, for example, Robert Dallek says "The highest officials of the [Johnson] administration, including the President, believed it 'inconceivable' that Israel's 'skilled' defense forces could have committed such a gross error." (Dallek, 430-31). If Israeli intention was to cover up their criminal napalm attacks on Palestinian civilians in order to drive them out of Palestine, it seems to have been a success. What Israel was covering up, by trying to sink the USS Liberty was the crime of genocide.

Another witness to Israel's use of napalm against civilians in 1967 is Norman F. Dacey, who had been chairman of Volunteers for Nixon, whose open letter to then President Richard M. Nixon was published in Lebanese newspaper *Al-Anwar*, January 17, 1972. In it he tells

Nixon that he will henceforth campaign for Nixon's defeat, citing his disgust with US policies in the Middle East. "I have walked through Egyptian hospitals and seen row on row of beds of little children, their bodies burned black by American-made napalm, dropped from American-built planes in claimed 'defense' of Israel" (Dacey qtd. in Ashiurakis 1974).

In addition to its ongoing murders of Palestinians (such as the massacre of Jenin refugee camp in 2002) and the present campaign of assassination and wholesale killing in Gaza, Israel also continues its genocidal plans for the destruction of Palestinian cultural institutions. In *Imperial Israel and the Palestinians* (2002), Nur Masalha documents recent Israeli plans for the destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the two great mosques on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem (122-23), and for the "final solution" to the Palestinian problem which they hope to put into practice with the help of their American accomplices. This plan is now euphemistically called "transfer." According to this approach population transfer should be carried out between Israel and its Arab neighbors. An article published by Irving Moskowitz in *Moledet* (which Masalha grants often carried "disinformation articles"), the American Jewish millionaire says, "only one sole option has been left to American policy-makers: to come up with a completely new approach." This so-called new approach is euphemistically termed by Moskowitz as "population exchange." Moskowitz goes on to envision the relocation of the refugees from "Judea and Samaria" in Jordan as well as Syria and Iraq" (Masalha 182-83).

If proof were needed, Masalha demonstrates that Israeli pressure was behind successive US wars against Iraq including the present disastrous one. Meir Lifschitz is quoted as saying (in *Ha'olam Hazeh*, 22 August 1990, reprinted in *Moledet*, No. 24 (October 1990):

A war against Iraq is a real (religious) duty. If it is possible to make provocation, we must carry this out immediately. Such a golden opportunity in a convenient international situation falls into our hand once every hundred years... No one will busy himself with the triviality of transfer which we will carry out in parallel at the same time... Who exactly will be interested in the fate of two million Palestinians, who supported the butcher of Baghdad and are settled on the lands of the little king (King Hussein)? (184)

And Masalha summarizes: "The gist of Lifschitz's argument is that war against Iraq should be provoked if only so it could be utilized for the forcible mass expulsion of the Palestinians" (185). Masalha's evidence that the ethnic cleansing (read genocide) of the Palestinian population has always been Israeli policy is confirmed by Jonathan Cook in *Blood and Religion* in which the focus is on growing pressure for the "transfer" not only of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza but those within 1948 Israel as well. With these powerful texts in mind, it is impossible not to see the present siege on the entire Palestinian community, as a prelude to the "final solution."

Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* contains a cryptic message of the coming horror according to a brilliant reading by Joe Cleary in *Literature, Partition, and the Nation State* (2002). Cleary points out that readers found the conclusion of *Men in the Sun* too dark because Kanafani (assassinated with his young niece by a Mossad car bomb in Beirut in 1972) made his readership face "not merely their own political paralysis but the even more dreadful spectre of their ultimate disappearance as a nation" (Cleary 223).

By the end of the novel all three Palestinian migrants are dead, and only Abul Khaizuran, rendered sterile by his catastrophe, remains. This threat of national extinction is the real terror provoked by the ignominious dumping of the three Palestinian protagonists on the Kuwaiti garbage dump while Abul Khaizuran pilfers Marwan's broken watch—a metaphor for the termination of Palestinian time. 'Pessimism' is a totally inadequate term, however, to express what is involved in this act of imagination (Cleary 223).

Cleary's analysis of Kanafani's thesis seems to me a salutary though stark necessity which must be faced not only by the Palestinians but by all who would wish to prevent another genocide. Signs of a coming finale to the genocide already long in progress in Palestine are far clearer than those from which Lemkin understood that Hitler really planned to liquidate the Jews, Gypsies, Slavs and others. As Cleary concludes:

To counter the possibility of such an ignominious ending [extinction], Kanafani requires that his readership disavow the very disavowal that dismisses this fate as 'unthinkable.' The wager of *Men in the Sun*, then, is that nothing less than the courage to contemplate the possibility of their own erasure from history can steel the determination necessary for Palestinians to avert that fate. (Cleary 223)

It is hoped that this paper will go some way towards hastening a general awakening to Kanafani's message.

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Postscript, Feb. 18 2009:

What Will Gaza Look Like after The Resistance has been Crushed? It would look a lot like Wounded Knee, and We Can't Let This Happen

The assault on Gaza has not ended, air strikes continue and the Crossing points into Gaza are still mostly closed. But the nature of this barbaric attack marks a new low in terms of sheer savagery. If anyone is still in doubt about the intentions of Israel towards the Palestinians, let him read Phil Weiss's report on Dr. Mustafa Barghouti talk at Columbia University on February 16, 2009. A shocked Barghouti said he had been unable to speak about what he saw in Gaza for four days. Among the horrors in his account was "two girls who watched their father... shot and bound and left in the street to serve as a target dummy. His wife and daughters watched their father executed" ("Barghouti at Columbia" by Phil Weiss).

There are reports of Israeli soldiers eating chips and laughing as their colleagues shoot women holding up white flags. Families ordered into houses at gunpoint and then the houses being destroyed over their heads, children being left among the bodies of their mothers and siblings for days when Israeli tanks blocked access by ambulances. Makeshift shelters opened by UNRWA in schools, the coordinates given to the Israelis, being shelled. Thousands of phosphorous bombs dropped into residential neighborhoods, bodies burned through to the bone. The massive trauma to Palestinian society will take many years to heal.

But the real horror for me is that most of the Israelis seen on the media are proud of what they have done, the sheer malice and gloating: soldiers grinning as they carry the flag above their tanks. After practicing killing in a mock-up of an Arab village in the Negev, they actually regard this grisly exercise, this cowardly assault on a captive, starving people, as somehow a victory! While the

chief Rabbi for the IDF assures them that they are doing God's will! Israeli society is sick.

The elections show that Avigdor Lieberman has gained enormous power. A few years ago he was dismissed as a fanatic racist, who advocates land and population exchanges, seeking to reduce the number of Arabs who are Israeli citizens and dividing Jews and Arabs into two homogeneous states.

Now it is clear how the U.S. State Department's designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization facilitates the genocidal aims of this newly powerful figure. Lieberman is the true face of Zionist intentions. There is no objective basis for the "finding" that Hamas and Hezbollah are terrorist organizations, except that the US is on Israel's side. However, the practical consequences of this labeling are catastrophic. Calling Hamas a "terrorist" organization serves as a license for Israel to exterminate all of "them"—not only armed resistance fighters, but all unarmed men, women, and children. In a totalitarian regime, all resistance is criminalized, though the resistance is often composed of the most courageous and principled members of the target community. The withdrawal from Gaza was not a renunciation of ill-gotten land, but a ploy to make Gaza a free-fire zone in order to further the genocide of the Palestinian people: Jewish settlers were just in the way.

The starving population of Gaza is penned up in a huge outdoor concentration camp, without any avenue of escape. Their fields, orchards and chicken-farms have been systematically bulldozed, their fishing boats burned or shot at, over-flown by drones and Apache Helicopters night and day. Onto a people starved and traumatized by months of siege, the Israeli pilots poured phosphorous

bombs, cluster bombs, bunker-buster bombs, leaving hundreds of men, women and children including babies dead and mutilated with hideous burns and amputations, relying on hospitals without medicines or, in many cases, without electricity. Is this something to be proud of? As Gideon Levy remarked, it is one of the most shameful operations in the history of warfare. And they are proud of this? This is pathological, and the psychopathology evident in this ghastly operation bears analysis.

If we want to know what Gaza will look like after the resistance has been crushed—and that is the noble aim of those vying for election—all we have to do is to overcome our habitual amnesia and take a look back at what happened to the Minneconjou Sioux in 1890 at Wounded Knee. See the brilliant book, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present* by Ward Churchill (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997).

Among the horrors of the Israeli criminal frenzy in Gaza was the almost universal approval of the Israeli

population (with only a few notable exceptions), and the way that the slaughter of Palestinians, became a spectator sport. In the aftermath of the slaughter, politicians vied for the most callous statements: like Benjamin Netanyahu saying the army had not gone far enough, and apparently all are vowing to “crush Hamas completely.” This is just like the vow of General William Tecumseh Sherman who said in 1867, twenty-three years before Wounded Knee, that “We must act with vindictive earnestness against the [Lakota Sioux] even to their extermination, men, women and children.” (Churchill 240)

Equally ghastly from my view as an American has been the standing ovations given Shimon Peres before the US Senate, considering the genocidal nature of Israeli policy. But after all, the Americans, as a people, have never confronted their own genocidal history, so they are not really in a position to reproach Israel’s ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people.

—Clare Brandabur

Dr. A. Clare Brandabur received her BA from Seattle University, and MA in Philosophy from Xavier University, with a thesis on Scotus and Aquinas. She received a Doctorate in Comparative Literature from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, with a dissertation on The Faust Theme as Descent Into Hell Myth. After having taught in the English Department at the University of Illinois for twelve years, Dr. Brandabur taught extensively in the Middle East starting in 1981 with three years at Birzeit University in Occupied Palestine, three years at Al-Ba’ath University in Syria as a Fulbright Professor, Bilkent University and Middle East Technical University in Turkey, the University of Bahrain (also as a Fulbright Professor), and at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, for four years before coming to Dogus University in Turkey. Dr. Brandabur has published articles on James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, D. H. Lawrence, Thomas Hardy, William Butler Yeats, Naguib Mahfouz, Yasar Kemal, Naz>m Hikmet, George Orwell, Michael Ondaatje, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli and John Fowles, many of which have grown out of Conference presentations, and most of which show a comparative approach as well as, increasingly in recent years, an interest in post-colonialism.