

FACTS ABOUT ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST

I. Introduction:

This briefing, we believe, is necessary, because in our opinion, the level of propaganda and anti-Semitism hasn't been higher since WWII. In addition, the dominant media *has been untrustworthy* in informing the public. Currently, anti-Israel sentiment among the academic left on college campuses, and in Western Europe is unprecedented in recent times. Note the three following quotes:

*The claim of universities to be fostering diversity and preventing discrimination against vulnerable minorities is oddly compromised by a surge of anti-Semitism. With the recent addition of Columbia and Yale, over 50 campuses are currently circulating faculty petitions to divest from Israel and from American firms selling arms to Israel. Faculty at Georgetown, Michigan and Harvard have gone out of their way to invite speakers best known for their defamation of Israel and the Jews. Ruth R. Wisse. **Wall Street Journal**, 12/13/2002.*

*The struggle of Palestine greatly facilitated the acceptance of the anti-Semitic interpretation of history, and led some to attribute all evil in the Middle East and, indeed, in the world to secret Jewish plots. Bernard Lewis. Quoted in: **Frontpage**, 12/5/2002.*

*The Jews share boundless hatred of gentiles, they kill women and children and sow destruction... Israel is today populated by people who are not descendants of the Children of Israel, but rather a mixture of slaves, Aryans and the remnants of the Khazars, and they are not Semites. In other words, people without an identity, whose only purpose is blackmails, theft and control over property and land, with assistance of the Western countries. From Egypt's leading newspaper, **Al-Ahram**, (June, 2001)*

II. The Origin of the term: *Palestine*

The name *Palestine* comes from the Hebrew *peleshet* and it means *Sea People*, a non-Arab people. In English Bible translations the word became *Philistine*, a land conquered by the Israelites in Bible stories we are all familiar with. In the First Century A.D. the Romans crushed the semi-independent kingdom of Judea, then derisively referred to the former land of Judea as *Palestine* to rile the Jews.

Hence Palestine is a geographical term.

- III. A Brief Historical Overview of Israel and their relationship to the Land.
- A. Abraham, a descendant of Shem, the son of Noah, was born about 2166 B.C. God called him out of Mesopotamia into the land now known as Israel.
 - B. Joseph, a great grandson of Abraham was sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers where he emerged as a great leader in Egypt.
 - C. The Hebrew people multiplied greatly in Egypt to the point where they became a threat to the Pharaoh who enslaved them and attempted to exterminate them.
 - D. God miraculously, through their great leader, Moses, delivered them from Egypt (i.e. the Exodus) via the Red Sea and into the desert where they are given laws at Mt. Sinai and they become a theocracy, circa. 1446 B.C.
 - E. After wandering in the desert for 40 years, and with God enabling them through Joshua, the land of Canaan is forcibly taken from the Canaanites and occupied by the 12 Tribes of Israel. They entered Canaan about 1400 B.C.
 - F. Under Kings Saul, David, and Solomon the new nation extended its territories.
 - G. Early in the 10th Century B.C. Israel became a divided kingdom with Israel in the north (10 tribes) and Judah in the south (2 tribes).
 - H. In the 8th Century B.C. Assyria deported the northern 10 tribes of Israel to Assyria. Captives from other nations are in turn settled in the region of Samaria.
 - I. In 586 B.C. Babylon leveled Jerusalem and deported the Jews to Babylon. During the 70 years of captivity the area of Judah was sparsely populated.
 - J. After 70 years a remnant returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and the temple, but they are now under Persian rule.
 - K. About 330 B.C. the Land came under the control of Alexander and the Greeks.

- L. Rome took control about 198 B.C. and in 70 A.D. Rome burned Jerusalem and Herod's temple was destroyed. Early in the 2nd Century a final revolt is crushed and many Jews are carried off to many parts of the Mediterranean as slaves. However, note: the land is never completely devoid of people of Jewish descent. Particularly around Hebron a small community of Jews continued to exist.
- M. After the destruction of the Jerusalem and the final collapse at Masada the land of Israel largely reverts back to desert. One historian said the city of Jerusalem was like a *plowed field*.

III. A History of the Land from 100 A.D. to Present

- A. Around 135 A.D. the land became a Roman colony. Jerusalem is renamed Aelia Capitolina and the Land is called Palestine.
- B. For several hundred years the land is ruled by the Christian Byzantine Empire.
- C. In 638 an Arab-Muslim Caliph made it part of the Arab-Muslim empire. They were ruled from Damascus and then from Baghdad. The land never became a nation or an independent state. Most of the inhabitants adopted the Arabic language and the religion of Islam. Early in the 8th Century the first Mosque was built on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.
- D. In 1099 Christian Crusaders from Europe conquered Palestine. After this date the land is never again under Arab rule. While the land became politically independent it never developed a national identity. It was largely a military outpost of Christian Europe. It lasted about 100 years then was joined to Syria (about 1291) under the Mameluks for a short time before it came under the domination of the Ottoman Turks early in the 16th Century.
- E. Around 1881 some Jews bought land from wealthy, but mostly absentee Arab landowners and began to move back to Palestine. They were known as Zionists since they wanted to restore the land as an inalienable possession of the Jewish people. When they arrived the land was sparsely occupied, in a stateless condition, and a virtual desert. The Arabs that did live there were largely beduin and were upset that rich absentee Arab landowners were selling the land that they were living on and grazing their

flocks. Jewish settlers were often attacked and their homes and fields set on fire.

- F. During WWI the Ottoman Empire collapsed and Palestine was taken by the British. Thus under the authority of the League of Nations Palestine was administered by the British.

IV. The History of the Modern State of Israel

- A. In 1917 a document called the Balfour Declaration was presented before the British parliament which stipulated that the British government was sympathetic to the Zionist goal of restoring a homeland for the Jewish people. One month later the British were successful in pushing the Turks out of the Palestine, and a year later it came under British rule. This mandate, and Hitler's rise to power in Germany, gave rise to an increase in Jewish immigration back to Palestine. By 1936 Jews comprised 31% of the sparsely populated land.
- B. In 1937, the British, seeing the conflict that ensued, discontinued their backing of the Balfour Declaration and proposed that the land be divided up between Israel and Arab governments. This was known as the *Peel Commission*.
- C. By 1940 the British Government, now under full attack from Hitler, needed to make friends with the Arabs, the reason: oil. Churchill issued a *White Paper* policy that restricted Jewish immigration at a time when many Jews were desperately trying to escape. Jews in Palestine, incensed at this policy, formed an underground force to kick the British out of Palestine. The man that led that group was Menachem Begin. A few years later these rogue Jewish groups assassinated a close friend of Churchill. This event caused the British to further distance themselves from the Jewish cause.
- D. By the end of 1944 the world was beginning to learn about the horrible details of the holocaust in which 6 million Jews perished. This gave rise to the question: *Why can't Jews have their own homeland?* Survivors in Europe were demanding to be allowed to immigrate to Palestine. Pres. Truman pressured Britain to loosen their immigration restrictions. By Feb. of 1947 the British took the problem to the newly formed United Nations for help. On Nov. 29, 1947 the U.N, agreed to separate Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab areas, to establish Jerusalem as an international area, and to economically tie in all three entities. The Jews agreed to the principle of dividing up the country; the Arabs said they would do everything in their

power to see that it would not be implemented.

- E. After enduring constant attacks on its populated neighborhoods Chaim Weizmann, leader of the Zionists convinced Truman to support their cause. When he agreed they declared the establishment of a state on May 14, 1948. Truman immediately recognized the state of Israel. The Soviet Union followed suit along with dozens of other countries. Israel was subsequently attacked by the Arabs in superior numbers but the Jews, many who were WWII veterans, defeated them, but Trans Jordan succeeded in driving out the Jews from the west bank and in East Jerusalem, and Egypt took control of the Gaza strip. Hence, Jerusalem was split in two, with the Jews getting the New City and the Arabs getting the Old City. The Arabs ended up settling in two areas: the West Bank and a small area known as the Gaza Strip.
- F. In the following decades the new Jewish settlers caused the desert to bloom. New infrastructure was built and the new state became powerful far beyond its small size. All this time it enjoyed the economic and moral support of the West.
- G. In 1964 the Palestine Liberation Organization was formed by Zuheir Muhsin and led by Nobel Prize winner, Yasser Arafat, one of the world's most violent leaders in the tradition of Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and his contemporary, Sadam Hussein.
- H. In June 5, 1967, in what is known as the Six Day War Israel attacked Egypt who had amassed troops on Israel's border. Jordan soon joined the battle. By June 11, Israel controlled the Sinai desert, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Old Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights.
- I. On Oct. 6, 1973, on Israel's most holy day, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, but they were beaten back and a cease-fire on Oct. 24 took effect.
- J. In September 1978 Egypt and Israel agreed to framework for peace. In March 26, 1979 they signed a treaty whereby Egypt would recognize Israel and Israel would withdraw from the Sinai in three stages. Egypt's Prime Minister, Andwar Sadat was assassinated for his efforts.
- K. In June 1982, Israel, for security reasons, invaded Lebanon but withdrew by Feb. 16, 1985.
- L. In 1993 Yitzak Rabin and Yasser Arafat reached an agreement in Oslo,

Norway that provided for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and in Jericho, but it was never implemented. Instead an uprising against Israel occurred.

V. Common Myths About the Middle East

- A. The settlement of Jews in Palestine after 1948 led directly to the displacement and exploitation of the long-established Arab population. The West, embarrassed by the horrors of the holocaust, had founded the state of Israel to clear its conscience, and Arab residents of Palestine were forced to pay the price. The truth is, that the Arab population that could prove long-time residence, were offered full citizenship by the state of Israel. Today there are around one million Arabs who hold Israeli citizenship with full rights to vote in free elections and elect officials to parliament . The majority of the Palestinian population in Israel today are refugees from Jordan, Egypt, and Kuwait.
- B. The majority of the Palestinians live in abject poverty in poor refugee camps. This is only partially true. These refugee camps are administered by the United Nations. The people are not living in tents or in squalid conditions as the news media would have us believe. There is permanent housing, infrastructure, and hospitals, etc.
- C. This article from the PLO charter is proof that the Palestinian’s claim that the West Bank and Gaza Strip constituted their ancient homeland is not true. The founder of the PLO, Zuheir Muhsin, made the following claim; “There is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. We are all part of one nation. It is only for political reasons that we carefully underline our Palestinian identity, because it is in the interest of the Arabs to encourage a separate Palestinian identity. Yes, the existence of a separate Palestinian identity serves only tactical purposes. *The founding of a Palestinian state is a new tool in the continuing battle against Israel.*” This statement explains why in numerous times in the past Palestinian leaders have rejected plans for statehood, the latest being at Camp David in 2000.

VI. Little Known Facts about the Middle East

- A. Lebanon is occupied today by the Syrian army yet we do not hear any kind of outcry from Palestinian organizations even when many of the victims are Palestinians.
- B. Kuwait ethnically cleansed all of its Palestinians—a third of million after the

1967 Six-Day War. The same scenario happened in Jordan. Today Jordan's borders are closed to all Palestinians. This is the country originally set up specifically for Palestinians!

- C. *From the end of the Jewish state in antiquity to the beginning of the British rule, the area now designated by the name Palestine was not a country and had no frontiers, only administrative boundaries.... Palestine has never existed...as an autonomous entity. There is no language known as Palestinian. There is no distinct Palestinian culture. There has never been a land known as Palestine governed by Palestinians. Palestinians are Arabs, indistinguishable from Jordanians (another recent invention), Syrians, Lebanese, Iraqis, etc. Bernard Lewis, **Commentary**, January, 1975.*
- D. As noted above the modern country of Jordan (then known as Trans Jordan) was originally designated by the Balfour Declaration to be the homeland for Arabs. Rulership was given to the Hashemite tribe by the British.
- E. Here are some interesting quotes about Palestine from Mark Twain's book ***Innocents Abroad***, written in 1867:
- There is not a solitary village throughout its whole extent (Valley of Jezreel)—not for 30 miles in either direction...One may ride 10 miles hereabouts and not see 10 human beings. For the sort of solitude to make one dreary come to Galilee...Nazareth is forlorn...Jericho lies a moldering ruin....Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and humiliation...untenanted by any living creature... A desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given wholly over to weeds...a silent, mournful expanse...a desolation....We never saw a human being on the whole route....Hardly a tree or shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country..... Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes...desolate and unlovely....*
- F. The late Yasser Arafat, was not even born in Palestine, but rather in Egypt. As a youth he was an follower of Hitler. He is a known pedophile who has stolen millions of dollars from his own people and stashed it in Swiss Banks. He rules his people as tyrant. He is without a doubt one of the world's most duplicitous leaders.
- G. As a result of the Six Day War Israel captured the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), and the Old City of Jerusalem from Jordan's King Hussein *not*

from Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians. Prior to 1967 there was no serious movement for a Palestinian homeland.

- H. Arabs control 99.9 percent of the Middle East, yet Israel's landmass constitutes only one tenth of a percent, and 60 percent of it is the Negev Desert!
- I. The Koran says nothing about Jerusalem, and there is no historical evidence that Mohammed ever visited Jerusalem, much less rode a white horse into heaven from the Dome of the Rock. In the Koran, 17th Sura, in a passage entitled *The Night Journey*, it notes that in a dream Mohammed was carried by night from the sacred temple to another temple in a remote place. In the 7th Century some Muslims believed this was in Jerusalem even though at that time none existed. Arafat is among several Arab leaders who deny that Israel ever had a temple in Jerusalem. He says: *Until now, all the excavations that have been carried out have failed to prove the location of the Temple....It is 30 years since they captured the city and they have not succeeded in giving even one proof as the location of the Temple.* Arafat's uncle was the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in the 1920's and 30's. It was his uncle who concocted the myth that Mohammed ascended into heaven from the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount. It was also this uncle who supported Hitler in the destruction of the Jews. He visited Hitler's death camps and encouraged Hitler to extend his *final solution* to North Africa and Palestine.
- J. In 1990 Arafat rejected a plan that would have given him 95% of his demands. What he wanted was the right for millions of Arabs to immigrate to Israel which he knew would eventually result in Israel's destruction.
- K. Jordan makes up 80% of the landmass that was originally part of the Palestine Mandate. 70% of its inhabitants are Palestinian Arabs, yet Jordan is not the target of a liberation movement. Today no Palestinians from Israel are allowed to immigrate there.

VIII. Theological Perspectives of Israel's future

- A. The majority view throughout church history is that God had a special relationship with Israel in that He chose this people to be a conduit for the coming Messiah-Redeemer. As part of that plan God gave to Israel the land formerly occupied by the Canaanites. As a result of their rejection of the Messiah, the land and their nationhood was taken away. (See Matthew 23,24). God then initiated a covenant of Grace with the Church of Jesus

Christ who are referred to in the New Testament as *the Israel of God*, the *Children of Abraham*, and a *chosen people*. (See: Gal.3:7,28ff.; and I Pet. 2:9)

- B. A view that became increasingly popular in the 20th Century is the view that God chose Israel to affect His plan for salvation as above, but the giving of the Land of Israel was part of an *unconditional* covenant that God made to His people through Abraham. When the nation was put under a curse in Matt. 23 that only referred to that generation. Since Israel never fully occupied all the land granted to them in the Abrahamic Covenant, the belief is that God will restore the nation of Israel to a future generation of believing Israelites (Jews), and from whence The Messiah will rule the world. See Gen. 15:17ff. And Paul's teaching in Romans 11)

Note: Because a Christian holds the first view, that the Church is now spiritual Israel and that God will not physically restore the nation of Israel, does not make that person anti-Semitic. This is the rather unfortunate charge of Hal Lindsey in his book: *The Road to Holocaust*. This book is not only poorly written but represents case after case of faulty exegesis. Lindsey never cites one quote from anyone representing view A which could be called anti-Semitic. Unfortunately, many of Hal Lindsey's followers are now making similar charges. Many Christians (and there are multitudes throughout Church history) who hold the first view, are compassionate towards God's Chosen people and very pro-Israel.

Conclusion:

In our opinion, behind the conflict in the Middle East is a hatred of supernatural origin. This is not just an argument about stateless Palestinians; it's not just about territorial rights. The religion of Islam plays a key role here, as its Koran teaches that Jews are descendants of apes and pigs. Israel also is the only democracy in the Middle East; all Muslim countries are run as dictatorships, or by an oligarchy of religious leaders. They fear freedom and democracy because of what it would do to their power. Currently, the Arab world is putting millions of dollars into its propaganda machine, and unfortunately, these ideas are being re-broadcast in the West.

Sources:

(Two great authorities on the history of the Middle East are Bernard Lewis and Daniel Pipes. They have both written more books than can be listed here.)

Lewis, Bernard. *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years.*
John, Paul. *A History of the Jews.* (See especially Part Seven)
Merrill, Eugene H. *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel.*
Peters, Joan. *From Time Immemorial.*
Pipes, Daniel. *The Long Shadow: Culture and Politics in the Middle East.*
Price, J. Randall, *Unholy War: America, Israel and Radical Islam.*