

# Documentary Reveals How Israel Convinces Americans: “Palestine Occupies Israel”

By [Mnar Muhawesh](#)

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

In this episode of ‘Behind the Headline,’ host Mint Press **Mnar Muhawesh** meets **Sut Jhally**, an expert on media manipulation and propaganda. In the film ‘The Occupation of the American Mind,’ Jhally and others examine how high-paid spin doctors control the media message on Israel.

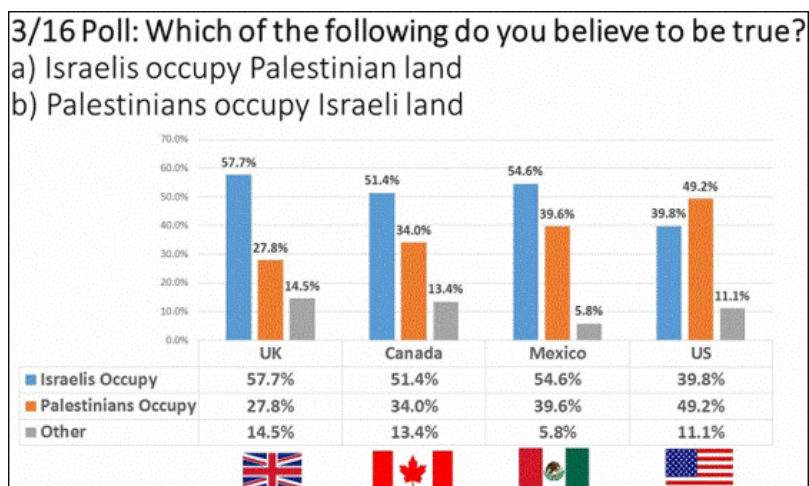
Following the Holocaust, the world community — led by the United States and Britain — sought to create a European Jewish-only state.

This humanitarian move, though, utterly failed in respecting the humanity of the land’s indigenous inhabitants — Christian and Muslim Palestinians.

Starting in December of 1947, their land and property was seized and destroyed to make way for the state of Israel, where white only European Jews would live . Over 750,000 Palestinians were expelled and over 10,000 were killed by the British and US armed Zionist militias, and later Israeli forces, during the Nakba, an Arabic word meaning “catastrophe.”

Those expelled by the Nakba and their Palestinian descendants who make up the world’s largest refugee population in the world are not allowed to return to their land.

Yet a recent [poll found that nearly half of Americans believe Palestine occupies Israel](#) — not the other way around. That’s because the mainstream, corporate-owned media continues to spin a propaganda wheel that dehumanizes Palestinians and paints Israel as a beacon of democracy.



Meanwhile, special interest groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, buy their way into the hearts and minds of our elected officials. Ever wonder why Israel gets \$3 billion in annual military funding from Uncle Sam? Connect the dots from the campaign contributions to the spending bills.

There's a lot riding on our relationship with Israel: Apart from serving as a proxy for U.S. relations in the Middle East and Africa, Israel is America's second-top destination for arms exports. Yep — the country's that's no bigger than the state of New Jersey is basically a black check for the military-industrial complex.

But not all Americans are on board with the notion of Israel as the victim of Palestinian oppression.

Another study showed that [62 percent of the population](#) now believes Israel gets too much foreign aid, and the [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement](#) has made waves across the world, imposing a kind of sanction against Israel's economy by targeting Israeli products.

A new documentary, "[The Occupation of the American Mind](#)," brings attention to how Israel's public relations campaign has successfully manipulated the narrative of the Israel-Palestine conflict — in that, it's not a conflict at all but a matter of modern-day colonialism, ethnic cleansing and apartheid.

Today I'm joined by [Sut Jhally](#), executive producer of "The Occupation of the American Mind" and a professor of communication at the University of Massachusetts. The film was produced, written and directed by Loretta Alper and Jeremy Earp.

I asked Jhally to explain how Americans are being kept in the dark about Palestine, and how that prevents a mass movement against Israeli apartheid from forming in the U.S.

Learn more about the US war in Afghanistan fueling the worldwide heroin crisis, and Israel's occupation of American minds:

**Mnar Muhawesh** is founder, CEO and editor in chief of MintPress News, and is also a regular speaker on responsible journalism, sexism, neoconservatism within the media and journalism start-ups. In 2009, Muhawesh also became the first American woman to wear the hijab to anchor/report the news in American media. Muhawesh is also a wife and mother of a rascal four year old boy, juggling her duties as a CEO and motherly tasks successfully as supermom. Follow Mnar on Twitter at @mnarmuh

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