

Nothing's Changed Since 1948 - Except Now Israel's Excuses Don't Work

We have been lied to for decades about the creation of Israel. It was born in sin, and it continues to live in sin

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The headline below, about yet another Israeli operation to ethnically cleanse the Palestinians in the tiny, besieged and utterly destroyed enclave of Gaza, was published in yesterday's Middle East Eye.

When I began studying Israeli history more than a quarter of a century ago, people claiming to be experts proffered plenty of excuses to explain why Israelis should not be held responsible for the 1948 ethnic cleansing of some 750,000 Palestinians from their homes - what Palestinians call their Nakba, or Catastrophe.



Israel's war on Gaza

Live: Israel army issues new displacement order from northern Gaza

1. I was told most Israelis were not involved and knew nothing of the war crimes carried out

against the Palestinians during Israel's establishment.

2. I was told that those Israelis who did take part in war crimes, like [Operation Broom](#) to expel Palestinians from their homeland, did so only because they were traumatised by their experiences in Europe. In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, these Israelis assumed that, were the Jewish people to survive, they had no alternative but to drive out the Palestinians en masse.

3. From others, I was told that no ethnic cleansing had taken place. The Palestinians had simply fled at the first sign of conflict because they had no real historical attachment to the land.

4. Or I was told that the Palestinians' displacement was an unfortunate consequence of a violent war in which Israeli leaders had the best interests of Palestinians at heart. The Palestinians hadn't left because of Israeli violence but because they had been ordered to do so by Arab leaders in the region. In fact, the story went, Israel had [pleaded](#) with many of the 750,000 refugees to come home afterwards, but those same Arab leaders stubbornly blocked their return.

Every one of these claims was nonsense, directly contradicted by all the documentary evidence.

That should be even clearer today, as Israel continues the ethnic cleansing and slaughter of the Palestinian people more than 75 years on.

1. Every Israeli knows exactly what is going on in Gaza – after all, their children-soldiers keep [posting videos online](#) showing the latest crimes they have committed, from blowing up mosques and hospitals to shooting randomly into homes. Polls show all but a small minority of Israelis [approve](#) of the savagery that has killed many tens of thousands of Palestinians, including children. A third of them think Israel needs to go further in its barbarity.

Today, Israeli TV shows host debates about how much pain soldiers should be allowed to inflict by raping their Palestinian captives. Don't believe me? Watch this from Israel's Channel 12:

☐SHOCKING☐

Israel is quite possibly the only nation in the world where it is permissible and commonplace to go on TV and openly declare that the RAPING of prisoners should be a LEGITIMATE and OFFICIAL POLICY of the state and must be widely implemented.

pic.twitter.com/1PyRXk8fxU

— Niz (@NizMhani) [August 7, 2024](#)

2. If the existential fears of Israelis and Jews still require the murder, rape and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians three-quarters of a century on from the Holocaust, then we need to treat that trauma as the problem – and refuse to indulge it any longer.

3. The people of Gaza are fleeing their homes – or at least the small number who still have

homes not bombed to ruins – not because they lack an attachment to Palestine. They are fleeing from one part of the cage Israel has created for them to another part of it for one reason alone: because all of them – men, women and children – are terrified of being slaughtered by an Israeli military, at best, indifferent to their suffering and their fate.

The official death toll in Gaza is a lie. The casualty numbers are far, far higher.

In my latest article, I explain how the trick has been pulled off:
<https://t.co/WfH4wt1bjM> pic.twitter.com/qI0NFfRL8v

— Jonathan Cook (@Jonathan_K_Cook) [July 31, 2024](#)

4. No serious case can be made today that Israel is carrying out any of its crimes in Gaza – from bombing civilians to starving them – with regret, or that its leaders seek the best for the Palestinian population. Israel is [on trial for genocide](#) at the world’s highest court precisely because the judges there suspect it has the very worst intentions possible towards the Palestinian people.

We have been lied to for decades about the creation of Israel. It was always a [settler colonial project](#). And like other settler colonial projects – from the US and Australia to South Africa and Algeria – it always viewed the native people as inferior, as non-human, as animals, and was bent on their elimination.

What is so obviously true today was true then too, at Israel’s birth. Israel was born in sin, and it continues to live in sin.

We in the West abetted its crimes in 1948, and we’re still abetting them today. Nothing has changed, except the excuses no longer work.

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Featured image: A boy sits among the rubble following an Israeli airstrike on Gaza, March 2023. (Shutterstock)

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