

# Truth or Propaganda? Hollywood to Produce Film on Six-Day War Called 'Jerusalem 67'

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*Hollywood gave the green light to begin the film production of Israel's Six-Day War in 1967 based on Abraham Rabinovich's 'Battle for Jerusalem' An Unintended Conquest'. The film will be called 'Jerusalem 67'. The Times of Israel reported that Hollywood is onboard to shoot the film in Israel and that it would not be "Sugarcoated" according to Joseph Schick and Jacob Septimus who are the producers of the film.*

The article titled 'No sugarcoating' as first movie on '67 battle for Jerusalem takes shape' claims that Egypt, Jordan and Syria wanted to "drive the Jewish State into the sea" which was not the case according to several past statements made by Israeli officials including a statement made in 1972 by General Matetiyahu Peled, Chief of Logistical Command during the Six-Day war and one of the 12 members of Israel's General Staff in a political literary club in Tel Aviv who said "The thesis according to which the danger of genocide hung over us in June 1967, and according to which Israel was fighting for her very physical survival, was nothing but a bluff which was born and bred after the war."According to the Times of Israel:

The Six Day War changed the perception of Israel throughout the world. Schick describes a sense of inevitable doom many outsiders had when Egypt, Jordan and Syria allied themselves to drive the Jewish state into the sea. The euphoria that followed what Septimus calls the "ultimate come-from-behind" has evaporated in many corners with today's current, indirectly related conflict

IDF forces preemptively and without cause attacked Egypt, Syria and Jordan; they massacred more than 2000 Egyptian soldiers and 300 Syrian villagers in the Golan Heights. More than 300,000 Palestinians were displaced, many fled to the Jordan River's east bank, Lebanon, Egypt and Syria. The 1967 Arab-Israeli war started on June 5th when Israel launched a surprise attack against Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Egypt mobilized its military forces on the Israeli border as the war intensified. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) launched attacks against Israeli targets while Israel forces raided Jordanian-controlled West Bank which resulted in a Syrian-Israeli Aerial battle. Syria and Israel exchanged artillery attacks on both sides. Within six days, Israel had won the war. Israeli forces had taken control of the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem from Jordan. Syria had lost the Golan Heights.

Hollywood is a propaganda machine. But it is also fair to say there were several films that actually told the truth especially those directed and produced by Oliver Stone (Platoon and Born on the 4th of July) or Mel Gibson (Braveheart). Will Hollywood tell the truth of what

actually happened during the Six-Day War in 1967? I highly doubt it. A website based on the film called [www.jerusalem67.com](http://www.jerusalem67.com) states the events that lead to the war:

In May 1967, the city remained divided by walls and barbed wire fences. On May 14-15, 1967, Jerusalem hosted the annual Independence Day festivities. As the Israeli residents of Jerusalem celebrated the anniversary of their independence, they could hardly know that events were conspiring to bring a war that would completely transform their city, their country, and the Middle East. In weeks, the city of Jerusalem and the entire Middle East was completely transformed. What had been a two millennia old national yearning for Jews became a 20th century reality: a united city under Jewish control; the defining symbol of the rebirth of the Jewish people. Those who had celebrated Independence Day in divided Jerusalem walked to the Old City and stood at the Western Wall less than one month later. The walls and barbed wire were removed, but not without cost in human blood.

In the nearly half century since, the united city of Jerusalem has been transformed from a backwater into a beautiful and thriving metropolis. But it is only the city that was reunited, not its populations. Jerusalem would be seen as the heart of the Arab-Israel dispute, even as it would also become a city in which Jews and Arabs live alongside each other in relative tranquility

As the Times of Israel wrote:

Despite a few “smoky room” sequences with historical figures (Uzi Narkiss and Moshe Dayan atop Mount Scopus discussing Titus’ pledge to destroy the city will make an appearance, as will Rabbi Goren blowing his shofar) the film is very much told from the point of view of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances. We’ll see the battle through the eyes of an ambulance driver/single mother and her love interest called up to the Jerusalem Brigade.

“These were people that when trouble broke walked to the base – they weren’t deployed overseas,” Schick points out. The backyard nature of the conflict calls to Schick’s mind a friend he had who went to Jenin in 2002. “He fought a brutal battle, saw many of his comrades killed or wounded, and was back at work two days later. Where else does that happen but Israel?”

Will there be the point of view from the Egyptians, Syrians or Palestinians who were involved in the war? It will be interesting to see how the film would depict the Arab population during that time.

“Shick and Septimus refute the notion that a project with even a whiff of Zionist sentiment will have trouble in the marketplace.

“The ‘elites’ in New York and Los Angeles consider Israel a controversial topic, but most of the rest of America supports Israel. Middle America who goes to church and doesn’t even know any Jews, they like Israel. Justin Timberlake was just as the Wall. Jay Leno was there. Claire Danes wrote a piece for the New York Times Magazine. The Rolling Stones are in town. Sure, there’s BDS, and Danny Glover doesn’t like Israel and neither does Mel Gibson – I guess the next ‘Lethal Weapon’ won’t shoot there.”

Based on the Times of Israel ‘Jerusalem 67’ seems like it will be a propaganda film. In a time when the Israeli government is on the verge of annexing more Palestinian territories and

with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's demanding that the Palestinian Authority recognize Israel as a "Jewish State", 'Jerusalem 67' will attempt to gain more support for the state of Israel from the international community, especially in the US.

I don't have any interest in making a propaganda film," Septimus says. "The Yom Kippur War and Lebanon, and also the Entebbe Raid have been covered exhaustively. When you look back at the documents from the time, people were asking 'who will make the Hollywood movie about this?' and it never happened. It is similar to how in America no one touched Vietnam for years. People were afraid to touch it because of the legacy. But the legacy is the legacy - the story is still the story. Telling the story may make the legacy seem a little clearer

If Mr. Septimus is not interested in propaganda, then he should include various statements made by prominent Israeli officials over the years including what Mr. Mordecai Bentov, a member of the wartime national government had said about the war. "The entire story of the danger of extermination was invented in every detail and exaggerated a posteriori to justify the annexation of new Arab territory" according to a 1971 report by Al-Hamishmar, an Israeli newspaper. Then you might have a movie worth watching.

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