

Israel Essay

Prompt: Was the United Nations partition plan fair?

Remember: I suggest that as you read over each document that you create a T-chart to take notes on BOTH sides of the argument – then pick your decision after weighing out the evidence presented from those notes! **You are welcome to use outside resources but you must cite them and include a bibliography of those sources. You MUST USE the documents provided in this packet.** Good luck!

Essay DUE: _____

Document 1 - The Balfour Declaration: November 2, 1917

During the First World War, British policy became gradually committed to the idea of establishing a Jewish home in Palestine (Eretz Yisrael). After discussions in the British Cabinet, and consultation with Zion-ist leaders, the decision was made known in the form of a letter by Arthur James Lord Balfour to Lord Rothschild. The letter represents the first political recognition of Zionist aims by a Great Power.

Foreign Office

November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely, Arthur James Balfour

Document 2 - From "The Zionist Case" by Golda Meir (speech given March 25, 1946)

"As I have said, we came to Palestine to do away with the helplessness of the Jewish people through our own endeavors. Therefore, you will realize what it meant for us to watch from here millions of Jews being slaughtered during these years of war...We Jews only want that which is given naturally to all peoples of the world to be masters of our own fate...We are certain that given an opportunity of bringing in large masses of Jews into this country, of opening the doors of Palestine to all Jews who wish to come here, we can...create a free Jewish society built on the basis of cooperation, equality and mutual aid."

Document 3 - From “Children of a Tenth-Class God?” by Nihaya Qawasmi

“Late at night when everything is quiet I think about how I will ever forgive the Israelis for what they did to me. I don’t mean stealing my homeland, killing my people, turning me into a refugee, or depriving me from having a Palestinian state. I’m talking about myself – what they did to my personality.

I wish I had a normal life: no tension, no rage, no hatred, no hard feelings toward any-body. Even if they leave my country and give me back my rights, how will I overcome these feelings inside me?”

Document 4: Statement by President Nasser to Members of the Egyptian National Assembly, 29 May 1967:

Then came the events of 1956 - the Suez battle. We all know what happened in 1956. When we rose to demand our rights, Britain, France and Israel opposed us, and we were faced with the tripartite aggression. We resisted, however, and proclaimed that we would fight to the last drop of our blood. God gave us success and God's victory was great...

...Preparations have already been made. We are now ready to confront Israel. They have claimed many things about the 1956 Suez war, but no one believed them after the secrets of the 1956 collusion were uncovered - that mean collusion in which Israel took part. Now we are ready for the confrontation. We are now ready to deal with the entire Palestine question.

The issue now at hand is not the Gulf of Aqaba, the Straits of Tiran, or the withdrawal of the UNEF, but the rights of the Palestine people. It is the aggression which took place in Palestine in 1948 with the collaboration of Britain and the United States. It is the expulsion of the Arabs from Palestine, the usurpation of their rights, and the plunder of their property. It is the disavowal of all the UN resolutions in favour of the Palestinian people...

Document 5: Excerpts from the Hamas Charter

"After Palestine, the Zionists aspire to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates. When they will have digested the region they overtook, they will aspire to further expansion, and so on. Their plan is embodied in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", and their present conduct is the best proof of what we are saying."

"Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it." (The Martyr, Imam Hassan al-Banna, of blessed memory).

"The Islamic Resistance Movement believes that the land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgement Day. It, or any part of it, should not be squandered: it, or any part of it, should not be given up. "

Document 6 Extract from the Lemon Tree by journalist Sandy Tolan, Bloomsbury, 2007, p. 207. This excerpt is from a Palestinian, Bashir, who is visiting what was, prior to 1948, his family's home, and is currently being lived in by a Jewish family.

We were exiled by force of arms. We were exiled on foot. We were exiled to take the earth as our bed. And the sky as a cover. And to be fed from the crumbs to those among the governments and international organizations who imparted their charity. We were exiled but we left our souls, our hopes, our childhood in Palestine. We left our joys and sorrows. We left them in every corner, and on every grain of sand in Palestine. We left them with each lemon fruit, with each olive. We left them in the roses and flowers. We left them in the flowering tree that stands with pride at the entrance of our house in al-Ramla. We left them in the remains of our fathers and ancestors. We left them as witnesses and history. We left them, hoping to return

Image A



Alittihad Newspaper

Sherif Arafa

Image B

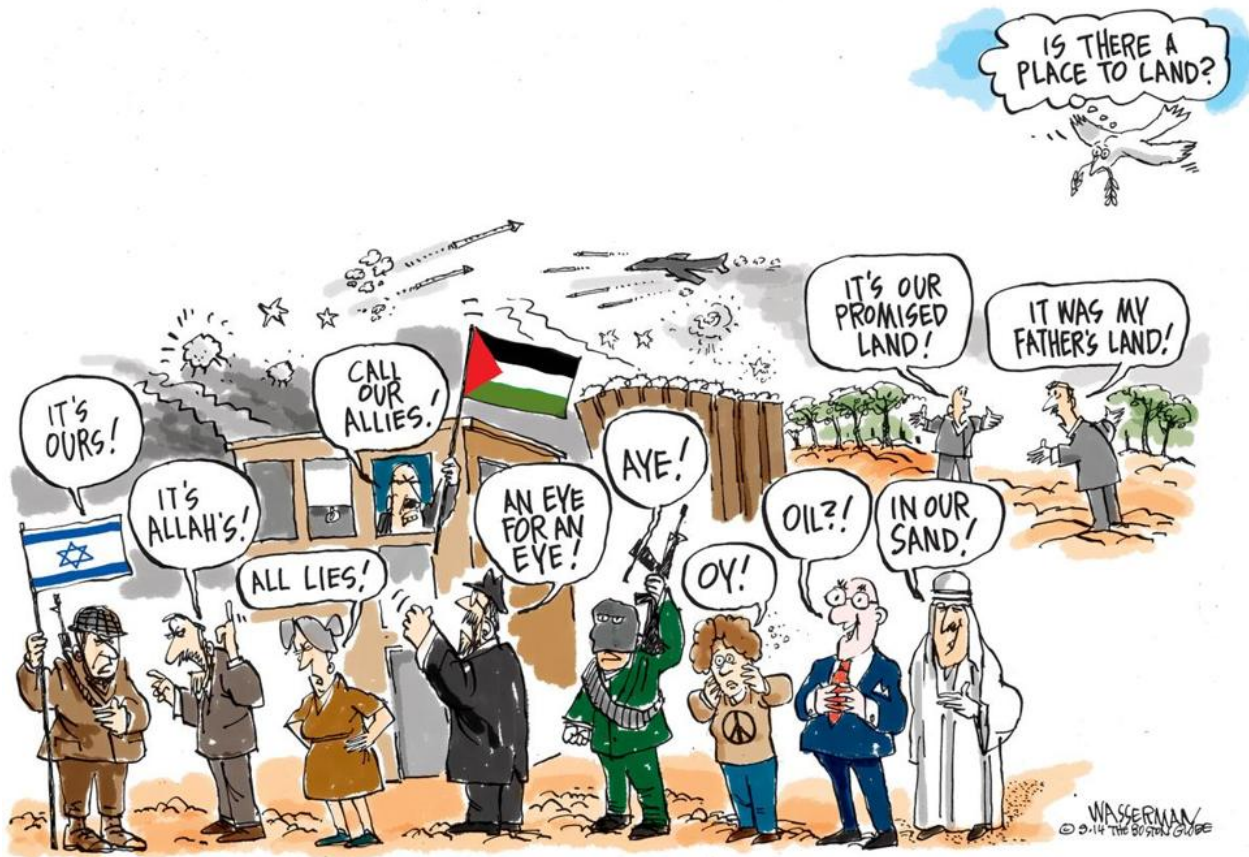


Image C

