

Top Pros and Cons

Introduction to the debate on the Israeli - Palestinian conflict.

PRO Israel and/or CON Palestine Statements	PRO Palestine and/or CON Israel Statements
1. Two-State Solution	
<p>PRO: "Well, there has emerged, over the course of the past ten years at least, a sense that the only way out of the situation in the Middle East is to establish a State of Palestine alongside Israel so that there will be an end of conflict. There is no other solution to end the conflict in reality. There is an international consensus about it as reflected by the so-called Road Map Quartet [the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations], which is after all the whole world. You have the United States, you have Europe, you have the Russians and the United Nations, which is the whole world, and then there is the Arab League, which is twenty-two different states, and there is the previous Palestinian administration, and the Israeli administration, all of them committed to the two-state solution."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-- Ziad J. Asali, MD President and Founder of the American Task Force on Palestine Interview with Bernard Gwertzman of the Council on Foreign Relations June 2, 2006</i></p>	<p>CON: "The paradigm of the Two States will not bring about stability. No! . . . (The Two-State solution) is not relevant. Not relevant . . . (The Palestinian state) will undermine the State of Israel. From there, the confrontation will go on.</p> <p>The State of Israel is ready to give the Palestinians an independent Palestinian state, but the Palestinians are not ready to give us an independent Jewish state . . . Every agreement you make will be the starting point of the next irredenta. The next conflict. The next war.</p> <p>The establishment of a Palestinian state will lead at some stage to war. Such a war can be dangerous to the State of Israel. The idea that it is possible to set up a Palestinian state by 2008 and to achieve stability is disconnected from reality and dangerous."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-- Moshe Yaalon Lieutenant-General and former Chief-of-Staff of the Israel Defense Forces Quoted by Uri Avnery in "The Bogyman" http://gush-shalom.org May 3, 2005</i></p>
3. Refugee Populations	
<p>PRO: "During United Nations debates in 1947 over the partition of Palestine, Arab delegates warned that the formation of a Jewish state might lead to violent retaliation against Jews in their countries. 'The masses in the Arab world cannot be restrained,' an Iraqi diplomat said at the time.</p> <p>The immediate outcomes ranged from anti-Jewish riots in Yemen and Syria to the revocation of citizenship for Jews in Libya to the confiscation of their property in Iraq. After the overthrow of King Farouk of Egypt in a military coup in 1952 and Israel's invasion of Sinai in 1956, Egypt declared Jews enemies of the state.</p> <p>For its part, Israel mounted operations to transport tens of thousands of Jews from Iraq and Yemen. While 856,000 Jews lived in Arab nations in 1948, only 7,800 were there in 2001, the American Sephardi Federation reports. About 600,000 went to Israel, the remainder to the United States and Western Europe."</p>	<p>CON: "At the end of hostilities early in 1949, the United Nations estimated that there were 726,000 Arab refugees from Israeli-controlled territories, about 70 percent of the Arab population of Palestine. The exact number is difficult to determine because it is impossible to know the true number of Arab illegals living in Palestine when the war broke out and the number of Bedouin who had become refugees. A figure of about 600,000 to 760,000 is probably more accurate...</p> <p>Exact figures are not possible, but according to Benny Morris, in his study of the Palestinian refugees, the British estimated in February 1949 that about 320,000 Palestinians moved into, or already resided in, the eastern portion of Palestine, which was controlled by the Arab Legion, and into Transjordan. Approximately 210,000 were in camps in the Gaza region, 100,000 went into Lebanon, and 75,000 to Syria. A few went to Egypt and others to Iraq. Some 150,000 remained within the Jewish state."</p>

<p>-- Samuel G. Freedman <i>Professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism</i> "Are Jews Who Fled Arab Lands to Israel Refugees, Too?" <i>New York Times</i> Oct. 11, 2003</p>	<p>-- Ian J. Bickerton, PhD <i>Professor of Middle Eastern History at the University of New South Wales</i> and Carla L. Klausner, PhD <i>Professor of Modern Middle East at the University of Missouri-Kansas City</i> <i>A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict</i> 2002</p>
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4. Palestinian Refugees' "Right of Return"

<p>PRO: "Implementing the Palestinian 'right of return' amounts to abolishing the Jewish people's right to self determination. It will make the Jewish people a minor ethnic group at the mercy of Muslims, a 'protected minority', just as fundamentalist Islam would have it. It would mean eradicating Israel."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-- Amos Oz <i>Founder of the Peace Now movement</i> "Doves Should Re-examine Their Perch," <i>The Guardian</i> Jan. 5, 2001</p>	<p>CON: "Many people do not believe that any ethnic group has the right to guarantee an ethnic majority in a nation-state, and therefore do not believe that Israeli Jews have the right to demand a perpetual Jewish-majority state. However: even those who support a Jewish majority in Israel should be able to accept the Palestinian Right of Return, since acceptance of this right will not necessarily overturn the Jewish majority in Israel."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-- <i>Palestine Solidarity Committee/Seattle</i> <i>Joint position statement with Palestine Information Project</i> Posted on their website www.palestineinformation.org Accessed on Apr. 10, 2007</p>
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5. Legality of Israeli Settlements in the West Bank

<p>PRO: "Israel possesses legal rights with respect to the West Bank and Gaza Strip that appear to be ignored by those international observers who repeat the term 'occupied territories' without any awareness of Israeli territorial claims. Even if Israel only seeks 'secure boundaries' that cover part of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, there is a world of difference between a situation in which Israel approaches the international community as a 'foreign occupier' with no territorial rights, and one in which Israel has strong historical rights to the land that were recognized by the main bodies serving as the source of international legitimacy in the previous century."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-- Dore Gold, PhD <i>Former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations</i> "From 'Occupied Territories' to 'Disputed Territories'" <i>Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs editorial</i> Jan. 16, 2002</p>	<p>CON: "Determines that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof, have no legal validity and that Israel's policy and practices of settling parts of its population and new immigrants in those territories constitute a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and also constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-- <i>United Nations</i> <i>Security Council Resolution 465</i> Mar. 1, 1980</p>
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