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Israel:



An Imperial Outpost

Images: *Joe Biden and Benjamin Netanyahu, GPO/ Handout/Anadolu (2024); Israeli soldiers detain a Palestinian boy, REUTERS (2017)*

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The settler-colonial state of Israel has long been a linchpin of European and US imperialism.

Images: *US military participate in frequent training exercises with their Israeli counterparts, AIPAC; Ursula von der Leyen and Benjamin Netanyahu, GPO*

Israel's establishment, beginning in the late 19th century, was guided by Zionism, i.e. the violent project of colonising historic Palestine to create a Jewish ethnostate.

From its inception, this project was imbued with colonial racism: presented by its architects, such as Theodor Herzl, as an *"outpost of [European] civilization" confronting Asian "barbarism."*

The decades-long process of colonisation was aided by Britain, which, seeking to maintain its imperial influence in the region, occupied Palestine from 1917 to 1947. It legitimised this occupation by declaring itself the guarantor of the Zionist project.

Note: The systemic antisemitic discrimination and violence Jewish people faced in Europe gave rise to many projects, including Zionism. However, from the beginning (and still today), Zionism was backed by antisemites who wanted to remove Jews from Europe.

Sources: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024); Herzl, Courier Corporation (2012); Hawari, Jacobin & Progressive International (2023)*



British troops marching in Jerusalem during the Arab revolt in Palestine, WSJ (1937)



Palestinians calling for the end of Jewish immigration and land theft, The New Arab (1936)

During their 30 years of occupation, British imperial dominance and Zionism worked together to oppress and expel the native Palestinian population.

The British enabled mass immigration of European Jews to Palestine, the creation of Zionist militias, and militarised repression of Palestinian life and resistance, for instance in the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-colonial Palestinian revolt of 1936–1939.

Sources: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024); Hawari, Jacobin & Progressive International (2023)*





Al-Nakba (1947)



In 1947, Britain started to pass regional control over to the Zionist state. Soon thereafter, Zionist forces equipped with British weaponry, intensified their colonisation efforts in an onslaught of dispossession and massacres of Palestinians known as Al-Nakba (the disaster), ultimately seizing 78% of historic Palestine.

The Zionist movement declared the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, alarming surrounding Arab nations.

Sources: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024); Hawari, Jacobin & Progressive International (2023)*



Image: *Al-Nakba (1947)*

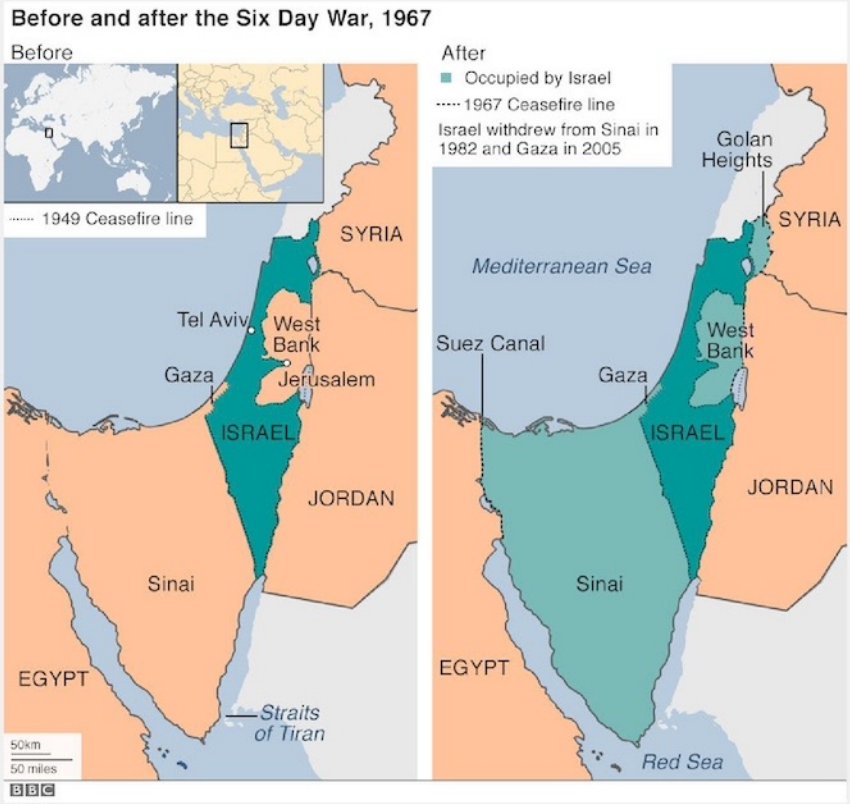


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However, the young settler-colonial state found allies in European imperial powers, with whom it shared a disdain for progressive Arab governments (e.g. Gamel Abdel Nasser's Egypt) that were working to break the shackles of colonial dominance in the region and beyond.

European states armed Israel in exchange for its services in weakening newly sovereign Arab nations and anti-colonial movements. For example, France gave Israel advanced fighter-jets, while Israel played a role in the assassination of the Moroccan revolutionary and convener of the Tricontinental Mehdi Ben Barka.

Sources: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024); Heimann, Diplomacy and Statecraft (2010)*



In 1967, the Six-Day War broke out between Israel and the Arab frontline states of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq, allowing Israel to occupy and eventually annex numerous territories, including the Gaza Strip. During the conflict, Israel inflicted considerable damage on the frontline states' militaries. This success impressed the political and military establishments in the United States.

Source: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024)*

After the war, the US began giving Israel enormous sums of military aid, a quarter of which was allowed to support industrial infrastructure within Israel's borders. This aid enabled Israel to develop its own military-industrial sector, which rapidly became a significant component of its economy, while also bolstering the United States' power in the region.

The development of Israel's defence industry led other countries in the Arab region to invest more heavily in weaponry, diverting resources from popular development, such as civilian infrastructure, education, and healthcare.

Note: Military aid is not normally allocated for *developing* the domestic industry, but rather for *purchasing* military equipment or other military-related purposes.

Source: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024)*

Israel's defence industry has also allowed the country to establish itself as a core actor in the repression of anti-colonial and liberatory movements around the world. Across Latin America, Africa, and Central Asia, it has trained and armed counter-revolutionary forces.

Israel is thus a key counter-revolutionary actor, doing the dirty work to maintain the exploitative and oppressive capitalist world system.

Source: *Ajl, Agrarian South (2024)*