

PAPER 2: MYTH VS. REALITY

A CRASH COURSE ON THE TRUTH

Don't believe everything you're told about the occupation of Palestine



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THE VERITAS PAPERS

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"I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF SOMEONE ELSE'S PROPAGANDA. I'M FOR TRUTH, NO MATTER WHO TELLS IT. I'M FOR JUSTICE, NO MATTER WHO IT IS FOR OR AGAINST. I'M A HUMAN BEING FIRST AND FOREMOST, AND AS SUCH I'M FOR WHOEVER AND WHATEVER BENEFITS HUMANITY AS A WHOLE." MALCOLM X

FACT OR FICTION

In the chaos of today's media war, it has become increasingly difficult to differentiate myth from reality. In light of this, we'd like to present a few common myths about Israel's occupation of Palestine. These have been summarized from **Part II of The Veritas Handbook**.

FICTION

(1) Israel only **reacts** to terrorism from groups like Hamas. If the Palestinians stopped advocating **violence**, there could be a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

FICTION

(2) The land of Israel has always belonged to the Jewish people, and Israel has the "RIGHT" to exist as a Jewish state.

FICTION

(3) Israel is the only **democratic** state in the Middle East.

FICTION

(4) Israel is not guilty of war crimes or breaking international law.

FICTION

(5) Israel is nothing like South Africa. To call it an apartheid state is a gross exaggeration and misleading.

FACT

(1) Israel is occupying Palestine- not the other way around. Thus, when Palestinians resist, it is because they are being occupied: they are acting in defense, while Israel, the occupying force, is acting in aggression. Hamas and other militant groups were created as a **reaction** to the Israeli occupation. Hamas was incepted in 1987; almost forty years after Israel declared independence and 20 after its occupation. Further, Israel has the strongest military in the region, while Hamas has to resort to weak rockets.

FACT

(2) Jews, Muslims and Christians all have a long and rich history in the region of Palestine. However, Jews have not always made up the majority of the population in Palestine (and did not in 1948). After the horror of the Nazi genocide, the world was full of regret and a Jewish homeland was created in Palestine, **against the will of the indigenous population, who were displaced and ethnically cleansed.** To say that Israel has the “right” to exist is to say that one has the “right” to invade a place against the will of the indigenous population.

FACT

(3) Since 1985, Israel has officially characterized itself as a “Jewish and democratic” state. While some aspects of Israel are democratic, Israel treats Jews with superiority- and this is not characteristic of a true democratic state. For example, Jews all around the world can immigrate to Israel and become nationalized, while Palestinian refugees cannot return to their homes. Further, the 4 million Palestinians who bear the brunt of Israel’s decisions under occupation have no input into Israeli politics. Although they have no right to vote, and are not recognized as citizens, Israel includes these occupied territories on its **official maps.**

FACT

(4) Israel has been found guilty of war crimes by the United Nations and numerous human rights organizations (incl. Amnesty International.) Additionally, it is in contravention of numerous UN resolutions, ICJ rulings and faces no penalties. In 2006, Israel was found guilty of killing at least 900 Lebanese civilians, and of committing crimes against humanity in Gaza in 2008. Despite international law demanding a withdrawal from the West Bank, and an end to the siege on Gaza, Israel continues to act with impunity.

FACT

(5) Israel is not South Africa. However, this does not mean it is immune from committing the crime of apartheid. If we look at the facts on the ground, and the official definition of apartheid, Israel is heading in a very scary direction. Different laws apply to Palestinians and Israelis, and special privilege is granted to Jewish people. There are Israeli only roads, facilities, land etc. There are also Israeli only buses, Palestinian only tunnels etc. If this isn’t apartheid, what is?

FICTION

Criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic. The only reason people are so against Israel is because they hate the Jewish people.

FACT

(6) Before the Zionist project to colonize Palestine, Palestinians and Jews had been living together for hundreds of years alongside one another, with very few skirmishes. In fact, in the 1929 massacres in Hebron, many Palestinians sheltered and saved 435 of their Jewish neighbours. Palestinians and Arabs are also Semites; to call them anti-Semitic is silly. Palestinians hate the occupation of their land, and want their own sovereign state. Their ill-feelings against the Israeli state are not because of its Jewish nature, but rather because of Israel's many aggressions .

FICTION

Palestinians hate all Jews and supported Hitler in WWII. They teach their children to **hate**, while Israelis teach their children to love and seek resolution.

FACT

(7) Palestinians do not hate Jews. And they did not support Hitler. There is no evidence to suggest that the majority of Palestinians supported Hitler. Jews were not persecuted or arrested in Palestine for being Jews. In fact, even now, there are many Jewish people who live peacefully and work with Palestinians in an effort to end the occupation. Palestinians are only upset with the aggressions against them. To ask Palestinians why they hate the government that ethnically cleansed them and continues to act in aggression towards them isn't really fair. What needs to be asked is what is being demanded for peace and resolution? If this means that Palestinians must give up their right to return to their homes and their right to self-determination, then yes, they are not seeking a 'resolution'. If it means ending the occupation and human rights abuses, then Palestinians would be more than willing.



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The Veritas Papers is a series of 12 pamphlets designed to shed light on some of the most pressing and controversial issues regarding the longest occupation in modern history. The Veritas Papers were released by *The Veritas Handbook: A Guide to Understanding the Struggle for Palestinian Human Rights*, which is available for a free PDF download on our website.

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