

PAPER 4

ISRAEL'S "RIGHT" TO EXIST A CRASH COURSE ON THE TRUTH

Why don't Palestinians accept or support this "right"?



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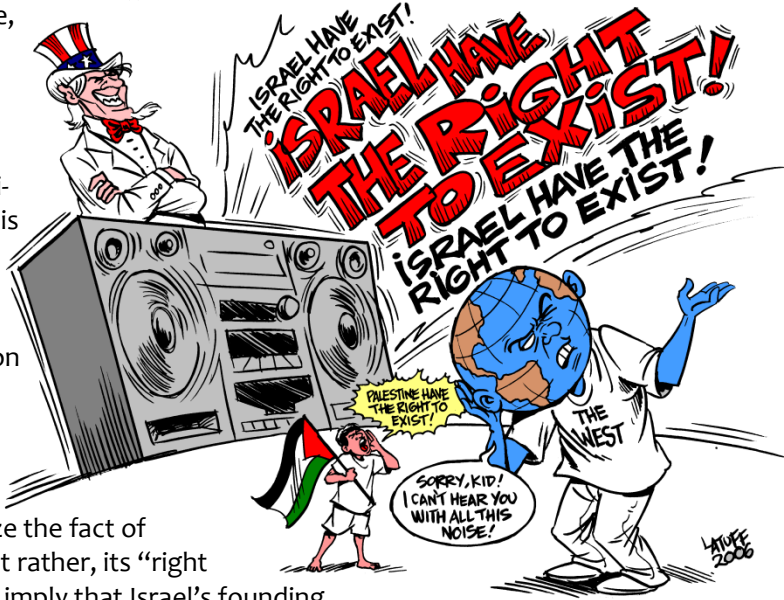
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DOES ISRAEL HAVE THE “RIGHT” TO EXIST?

This is perhaps one of the most controversial questions, and untouched issues regarding Israel. It has become taboo to ask the question, or to reply with an answer that does not follow the status quo. But, bold as we are, we're here to bring up some of the issues as to why the answer to this question is not as simple and straightforward as the regular person may think.

WHY IS THIS SO CONTROVERSIAL?

In common discourse, the “right” of Israel to exist is seen as a given. To suggest otherwise is seen as extreme or even anti-Semitic. However, this question is not so friendly towards the Palestinians, the indigenous population before the establishment of Israel. The demand of Israel is not that Palestinians recognize the fact of Israel's existence, but rather, its “right to exist”. This would imply that Israel's founding and colonialism was not only justified, but it was their moral right to displace almost one million Palestinians, and massacre hundreds of others.



INTRICACIES OF THE PHRASE

The phrase requires thought, and implies that Israel not only exists, but that it has the **moral right** to exist. Furthermore, Israel demands that everyone in the world recognize this supposed ‘right’. This is unlike any other state—after all, even Canada and America has not demanded that its indigenous population recognize its “right” to exist. A distinction must be made towards recognizing Israel's **existence**; a fact on the ground that many would say cannot be reversed, as opposed to Israel's **moral right** to exist. Further, Israel is perhaps the only country in the world not to have defined borders. So, on what borders is Israel being recognized?

ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT THOUGHT

More often than not, we find ourselves accepting this moral right, of all states to exist, without giving it a second thought. What does this mean however and what are

we truly saying? If we are to say for example, that Canada or America has the moral **right to exist**, we are saying that its founding was not only moral and righteous, but that it was the colonizer's right to do so. In fact, we are saying that the genocide of the entire indigenous population of America was justified in this process. Let's apply this line of thought to Israel's demand. For the Palestinians to accept or recognize Israel's "right to exist" as a Jewish state, would mean that they would be legitimizing their own ethnic cleansing, displacement, and dispossession. Is this a fair demand to make of the Palestinians? It would mean that they would be accepting the right of a state to exist that has ethnically cleansed them, murdered them, demolished their homes and their villages, and forced them to live under an apartheid system to this day. To demand that Palestinians accept Israel's "right" to exist as a Jewish state is unjust and not conducive towards any just and lasting peace. Demanding this is an obstacle to a just and lasting peace, as is the refusal to admit that what has been done to the Palestinians, was and is immoral and wrong. The fact that Israel's founding was dependent on the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians is not a something to celebrate or revel with pride in. Why do we treat Israel's case differently from that of every other colonial nation in the world?

WOULD IT BE FAIR TO ASK THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF NORTH AMERICA TO SAY THAT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM WAS MORALLY JUSTIFIED AND FURTHER, THE "RIGHT" OF THEIR COLONIZERS?

In the words of Ben White: *"To question the right of a state to exist at the expense of an entire group of people is not 'demonization', and nor is it 'anti-Semitic'. For Israel to be a Jewish state, the Palestinians must accept continued dispossession and second-class status in their own country, which is not a recipe for a lasting peace for either Palestinians or Jewish Israelis."*

Even 19th-century US governments did not require the surviving native Americans to publicly proclaim the "rightness" of their ethnic cleansing by European colonists as a precondition to discussing what land reservation they might receive.

Ifamericansknew.org

DOES THIS MEAN ISRAEL'S DESTRUCTION?

Nobody is here to advocate the destruction of an entire region or the mass murder of innocent civilians. The only purpose in this discussion is to recognize that Israel was not incepted on just grounds, and therefore, to demand from those that it

dispossessed that they should recognize Israel's "right to exist" is morally wrong. This does not have anything to do with Israel's future as a state. Above we mentioned that most people are ready to accept the fact of Israel's existence, without recognizing the moral right of its existence. Even Hamas has been willing to accept a Palestinian state on 1967 borders—but a Palestinian state that is fully sovereign. That does not mean however, that they are going to accept Israel's moral "right to exist", nor will they claim that Israel's establishment and ethnic cleansing was justified.

When the PLO and Yasser Arafat succumbed to saying that they "recognized Israel's right to exist", they paved the way for the Palestinian people to become entirely disillusioned with them. In this sense, the majority of Palestinians will not claim that Israel has a "right to exist" as a Jewish state, and they will never justify their own ethnic cleansing. Nor should they.

We're not here to advocate a specific solution, or to say that Israel must be "wiped off the map". However, we are here to say that justice is imperative, and the rights of the Palestinian people, the indigenous population, must be recognized. These Palestinians have rights that are enshrined in international law that Israel has yet to accept: they have the right to return to their homes, and they have a right to self-determination and a sovereign state- **rights that Israel has yet to recognize.**

Apartheid states do not have the right to exist, and nor do states that are unjust. What must be advocated is the destruction of Israel's unjust policies and apartheid. The apartheid must stop, the ethnic cleansing must stop, and the Zionist supremacy must also stop. The dispossession of Palestinians and the demolishment of their homes must come to an end. All citizens must be treated equally, and the unjust actions of the Israeli state towards the Palestinians must be recognized as unjust.

DID SOUTH AFRICA HAVE THE "RIGHT TO EXIST" AS AN APARTHEID STATE?



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