

Right to exist: The missing truth

Israel's founding was more legal and more moral than many other nations'

Israel's right to exist has sometimes been questioned, with the implication that its founding was somehow immoral or illegal. Here are some facts, missing from such accounts, that may change your mind.

Background. There has been a continuous Jewish presence for 3000 years in the land now known as Israel, beginning in Biblical times. In 1948 when Israel was created there were already some 650,000 Jews living there. This is quite different from nations created when an outside power came from afar and conquered the land.

Partition. On Nov. 29, 1947, the UN voted to partition the land according to the demographic distributions, with a Jewish majority existing within the Jewish portion. Partitioning land between two resident groups is not unusual (e.g., India/Pakistan), but few nations can claim the authority of the United Nations as a basis for their existence.

War. The partition was accepted by the Jews, but not by the Arabs, who intended 'to resist by force the implementation of these proposals, and to drown in blood any attempt to create a Zionist entity on a single inch of Palestinian soil.' The war started a few hours later when Arabs fired at a Jewish ambulance, attacked Jewish buses, and fired on Jewish residential areas. Later five Arab armies arrived, and 6000 Jews eventually died in the 'War for Independence'.

Ethnic cleansing. All the Jewish communities captured by the Arabs, without exception, were razed to the ground and the Jewish inhabitants murdered, taken captive or escaped. There were no Jews left in the Old City of Jerusalem, the West Bank or the Gaza Strip, which were taken over by Jordan and Egypt (thereby depriving Palestinians of their intended state). At the same time many Arabs fled from the war that they (the Arabs) had started. Today the 1.4 million Arabs living in Israel with full citizenship give the lie to accusations that it was the Jews who committed 'ethnic cleansing'.

The UN. While this was happening, the world and the United Nations did nothing to protect the young Jewish nation it had created or to stop the ethnic cleansing by Arabs. Israel was left to fend for itself, and fend it did. One can only wonder about the motives of those who, given these facts, accuse the only Jewish nation in the world of being illegally and immorally based. (To read more, visit www.kbrm.org.nz and click on Feb. 4 post.)