

# The Fall of the New City 1947-1950

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## **I**ntrouduction

*The United Nations resolved to partition Palestine and to internationalize Jerusalem. The Arabs of Jerusalem attacked the Jews, who were forced to defend themselves. Upon the first sound of gunfire, the wealthy Palestinian Arabs abandoned their villas in West Jerusalem. Orders by the Arab leadership led to the evacuation of the rest of the Palestinian Arab civilians. Despite British aid to the Arabs, the few besieged Jews managed to hold out in Jerusalem, even against a full-scale attack by the Arab countries, until a truce was declared. Left with thousands of homeless Jewish immigrants on the one hand, and thousands of empty Arab homes in West Jerusalem on the other, the Israeli government had no choice but to house the one in the other.*

So goes the conventional Zionist version of the fall of Arab West Jerusalem. Another tendency, typified by Lynne Reid Banks in her book *Torn Country*, is to negate the fact that Palestinian Arabs lived in West Jerusalem prior to 1948.<sup>1</sup> While some Palestinian Arabs have documented their struggle against the Zionist forces in West Jerusalem, many of their stories have yet to be told.

I have attempted to construct a narrative of the events surrounding the fate of Arab West Jerusalem between December 1947 and 1950 based on published first-hand accounts and secondary sources, supplemented by interviews. I have relied heavily upon the published research and analyses of historians and other scholars such as Henry Cattán, Walid Khalidi, Nur Masalha, Benny Morris, and Avi Shlaim. The work of Arnon Golan, although he constructs history exclusively from the conquerors' perspective, proved extremely helpful in tracing the process of Israeli settlement in West Jerusalem during the years in question.

As an introduction, it is important to place 1948 Arab West Jerusalem in the context of local, regional and international politics. In this task, I no doubt succumb to simplicity for the sake of brevity.

Before 1948, the Palestinian Arab community of West Jerusalem, which numbered about 28,000,<sup>2</sup> was one of the most prosperous in the Middle East. West Jerusalem's Arabs lived mainly in that section of the city's southern part (in mansional residential quarters from Talbiya down to the German Colony,<sup>3</sup> the Greek Colony,<sup>4</sup> Qatamon, and Baq'a) and in its eastern part (in Musrara on the northern side of the Old City and Deir Abu Tor on its southern end). The approximately 95,000 Jews of West Jerusalem lived mainly in its northern and western neighbourhoods, which were ringed on the west, going from north to south, by the Arab villages of Lifta, Sheikh Badr, Deir Yasin, 'Ayn Karim, Malha, and Beit Safafa.

Jerusalem as a whole was a central city both for Arabs and Jews in Palestine, but in different ways. Situated between a nexus of Palestinian Arab towns, Jerusalem was a hub of Arab economic, political, cultural, and social life. For Jews and Arabs—both Muslim and Christian—Jerusalem had a deep religious significance. For many secular Jews in Palestine, Jerusalem was neither politically, economically, nor geographically focal. However, the leadership of the Zionist movement recognized the city's deep religious and historical significance to Jewry. They saw that it would provide an essential component in granting a future Jewish state legitimacy and transforming it, to quote a contemporary journalist, into more than just an “obscure little state on the Levantine coast.”<sup>5</sup> The Zionist leadership also recognized that controlling Jerusalem would drive a wedge into Arab Palestine.

Still, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion, who was responsible for his organization's policy on Jerusalem, was cautious in mapping out designs on the city, knowing that any hint of Jewish control over what is widely regarded as the ‘holy city’ would elicit a backlash from the Christian West. The 1937 Peel Commission, a forerunner of the UN partition plan, made clear Western desire for proprietorship over Jerusalem and sought to permanently instate Britain as the guardian of Jerusalem because of the “overriding necessity of keeping the sanctity of Jerusalem and Bethlehem inviolate and of ensuring safe and free access to them for all the world.”<sup>6</sup> It has been suggested that the significant presence of Christian Arabs in the city prevented Ben-Gurion and his colleagues from exchanging with each other the kind of secret but explicit proposals for population transfer from Jerusalem that they planned for other areas earmarked for a future Jewish state.<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, Zionist leaders viewed a Jewish demographic majority in Jerusalem as a matter of utmost concern, because they believed that it would justify their claims and safeguard their interests in the city. Their intensive immigration efforts

were such that, by 1947, the population of the area demarcated by the UN partition plan for a *corpus separatum*, or international zone, which included both Jerusalem and Bethlehem, comprised 100,000 Jews, 65,000 Muslims, and 40,000 Christians.<sup>8</sup> Land ownership in the city area that would become West Jerusalem following the 1948 war was as follows: 33.69 percent Arab individually-owned property; 30.04 percent Jewish-owned property; 15.21 percent by other residents; 2.47 percent state land; and 18.59 percent roads and railways.<sup>9</sup>

In agreeing to the UN partition plan, which stipulated that the city's residents would decide its fate after ten years by referendum ballot, the Jewish Agency expected further large-scale Jewish immigration—mainly of European holocaust survivors—to swing the future vote in favor of Jerusalem's inclusion in the Jewish state.<sup>10</sup> Some historians conclude that the Jewish Agency's concession to the plan for a *corpus separatum* was tactical in that they counted on the Arab leadership's rejection of the plan.<sup>11</sup> In the event that the UN failed to impose internationalization, the Jewish Agency leaders further reasoned, they would be justified in annexing West Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup> By December 1947, they were convinced that only Jerusalem could be the capital of Israel.<sup>13</sup>

Between September and November, 1947, according to Francis Ofner, a journalist in Jerusalem, Jewish Agency experts claimed that most Arabs in Palestine preferred co-existence to violence.<sup>14</sup> Still, a majority of the leaders of Palestinian Arab political parties totally opposed the partition plan and its accompanying proposal to internationalize Jerusalem. According to the partition plan, the Jewish state, in which Jews at the time owned 1.67 million dunums out of a total area of 15 million dunums, would comprise 54 percent of Palestine, 55 percent of whose population would be Jewish. 500,000 Arabs—40 percent of the total Palestinian Arab population—within this area would become minority subjects of the Jewish state. In the Arab state would reside 725,000 Arabs and 10,000 Jews.<sup>15</sup> Palestinian Arabs saw that partition was, in Walid Khalidi's words, "Zionist in conception and tailored to meet Zionist needs and demands."<sup>16</sup> More recent revelations by historians proffer additional reasons for Palestinian Arabs, with the benefit of hindsight, to have been apprehensive about the plan, namely the fact that the other major players in Palestine—the Jewish Agency, King Abdullah, and Britain—had no intention of allowing a Palestinian Arab state to come into being.

In his book *Collusion Across the Jordan*, Avi Shlaim details the secret meetings and agreements between the Jewish Agency and King Abdullah of Transjordan to peacefully coordinate the partition of Palestine. Only a few days before the partition vote, King Abdullah and Golda Meir agreed that the part of Palestine designated an Arab state would be annexed by Transjordan, and that Transjordan's Arab Legion would not cross the boundaries demarcated for the Jewish state.<sup>17</sup> Jerusalem, since

it was set apart as a *corpus separatum*, was not covered by this agreement.<sup>18</sup> Shlaim concludes that fighting broke out in and around Jerusalem between Israeli and Arab Legion forces during the 1948 war precisely because their leaders had not reached an understanding regarding the city, while elsewhere in Palestine the two sides exhibited mutual restraint.<sup>19</sup> Shlaim also indicates that King Abdullah, given nominal command over all Arab forces in the war, wrecked the Arab League's plan for a unified invasion of Palestine in order to further his ambition of expanding his kingdom.<sup>20</sup>

Other member nations of the Arab League were well aware that Palestinian Arabs who lived in areas of Jewish demographic preponderance, like West Jerusalem, faced grave danger. The organization established a committee to aid their defense following Britain's decision in October 1947 to eventually withdraw from Palestine.<sup>21</sup> Still, the committee was slow in mobilizing assistance. It was criticized for basing itself in Damascus, not Jerusalem, and for having only a small proportion of Palestinian Arabs among its leadership.<sup>22</sup>

Both Arab and Jewish military experts concluded that, in the event of a conflict, the Jewish forces would defeat those of the Arabs.<sup>23</sup> The Arab Legion was the only Arab force capable of presenting a serious threat to the *Haganah*, the Jewish army described by one of its high-ranking officers as "one of the largest and best-trained underground armies in modern history."<sup>24</sup> Much of the Legion's effectiveness, however, was neutralized by King Abdullah's understandings with the Zionists and by the army's reliance on British commanders and supplies.

The Arab Legion was commanded by John Bagot Glubb, who Shlaim describes as an 'imperial proconsul' receiving direct orders from both King Abdullah and London.<sup>25</sup> British policymakers actively encouraged the 'Transjordanian option': the partition of Palestine between the Zionists and the Hashemites.<sup>26</sup> Britain sought to continue to wield influence in Palestine and decided that this could best be achieved via a state controlled by King Abdullah instead of one governed by Palestinian Arabs.<sup>27</sup> Contrary to popular Zionist opinion, Britain did not try to sabotage the birth of a Jewish state in 1948 and was at the time primarily interested in expediting the safe withdrawal of its Mandate administration and troops.<sup>28</sup> The United States, eager to thwart Soviet influence in the region, generally backed Britain's policy in Palestine and increasingly took the lead in championing Zionist aspirations. The first major instance of American intervention on behalf of Zionism came with the partition vote on November 29, 1947, which would likely have failed were it not for the heavy pressure that the Truman administration exerted upon UN member nations.<sup>29</sup>

## Outbreak of Fighting in Jerusalem

Immediately following the UN resolution to partition Palestine, fighting between Zionist and Palestinian Arab forces began in and around Jerusalem. To protest the resolution, the Arab Higher Committee (AHC) called Palestinian Arabs out on a three-day general strike. As part of this strike, on December 1, Jerusalem Arabs staged a militant demonstration that led to the burning and looting of Jewish-owned shops in the Mamillah mercantile district of West Jerusalem. According to some reports, the British police officers at the scene were indifferent; according to others, they actively participated by breaking store locks with crowbars and gunfire.<sup>30</sup> By most accounts, the rioting by Palestinian Arabs in Mamillah was the spontaneous act of individuals, and not prearranged. However, the *Irgun Zvai Leumi* (*Irgun*) and *Lehi* (Stern Gang) responded swiftly and with lethal force. Describing this sequence of events in a December 13, 1947 communiqué to London, Sir Alan Cunningham, the British High Commissioner to Palestine, wrote:

The initial Arab outbreaks were spontaneous and unorganized and were more demonstrations of displeasure at the UN decision than determined attacks on Jews. The weapons initially employed were sticks and stones and had it not been for Jewish recourse to firearms, it is not impossible that the excitement would have subsided and little loss of life been caused. This is more probable since there is reliable evidence that the Arab Higher Committee as a whole and the Mufti in particular, although pleased at the strong response to the strike call, were not in favor of serious outbreaks.<sup>31</sup>

In their review of the fighting during December 1947, the heads of the Arab Division of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, in an early January 1948 meeting with Ben-Gurion and the *Haganah* commanders, severely criticized *Haganah* attacks on Romeima and Silwan in Jerusalem. They cited these attacks as examples of how, in December 1947, *Haganah* units carried out operations which, in Benny Morris' words, "tended to widen rather than curtail the area of hostilities" into hitherto peaceful zones.<sup>32</sup> Two *Irgun* bombings outside the Old City around the turn of the year—one at the Damascus Gate and the other at the Jaffa Gate—killed dozens of Palestinian Arabs.<sup>33</sup>

Palestinian Arab attacks in December consisted primarily of sniping at Jewish vehicles on the road leading from Tel Aviv into Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the spiral of retaliation and counter-retaliation rapidly sank into the mire of open warfare.

Both the Jewish and Arab leaders of Jerusalem strove to mobilize their constituents for war. For Jerusalem's Arabs this was a painfully slow process,

hampered by the paucity of trained soldiers, lack of funds, poor access to modern weaponry, and a fragmented leadership. As Abdullah Budeiri, one of the few Jerusalem Arabs with professional soldiering experience at the time, noted: “The partition resolution came as a big shock to most of us. We expected the partition vote to fail and had made no preparations for war.”<sup>34</sup>

The main Arab force in and around Jerusalem before May 1948 was the *Jihad Muqqadas* (Holy Struggle), a semi-irregular fighting force led by the widely popular local leader 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini, which commanded about 380 men in the city itself and another 250 in its rural environs. There were also some 100 to 150 fighters of the Arab League-sponsored Liberation Army, commanded by Fawzi Qawuqji, as well as volunteers of the Manko Company, a contingent of irregulars financed by Haj Ibrahim Manko. Altogether, the Arab forces commanded less than 1,000 full-time fighters in the Jerusalem area.<sup>35</sup> There were also dozens of ‘part-time’ troops, who would rally to help ward off a Zionist offensive or participate in a nearby Arab attack and return home after a few hours.<sup>36</sup>

In most cases the weapons held by the Arab fighters were antiquated and in short supply. Abdullah Budeiri remembered perusing the Old City’s condiment stores, which doubled as gun shops: “I even saw a weapon for sale from the last century that was marked *British East India Company*.”<sup>37</sup> A Beit Safafa villager recalled an old Italian-made gun supplied by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini: “You could press the trigger one hundred times, and the gun would only fire once, with a burst of flames so bright that I could not use it at night for fear that I would be spotted by the enemy.”<sup>38</sup> The National Committee, an umbrella organization of the Arab Jerusalem neighbourhood committees, dispatched representatives to Syria to buy weapons, but only returned with fifty old guns.<sup>39</sup>

The quality and organization of the Arab forces was inconsistent. The Liberation Army troops, according to Benny Morris, were “militarily fairly useless [...] and at loggerheads with the local Palestinian militiamen and population.”<sup>40</sup> Due to rivalries and jealousies among Arab leaders, communication between the forces was poor. Animosity between the Mufti of Jerusalem and the Arab League manifested itself in the field as suspicions between 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini and Fawzi Qawuqji.<sup>41</sup> In late January 1948, AHC Secretary and Jerusalem National Committee leader Husein al-Khalidi complained to the Mufti in Cairo that 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini’s troops were not coordinating with the local committees, creating, in Khalidi’s words, “indescribable confusion.”<sup>42</sup> Motivationally, many Palestinian Arabs were willing to fight to the bitter end to defend their neighbourhoods and villages; however, they seldom organized collective defensive or offensive strategies.<sup>43</sup> Another bane for the Arab forces was the crude level of medical care: “We lost lives from treatable wounds; someone would be shot in the hand, and it would be amputated,” recounted Budeiri.<sup>44</sup>

The Zionist forces, due to their high level of preparation, were able to mobilize a far more effective fighting force, far more quickly, than the Palestinian Arabs. Only eight days after the partition vote, the Jerusalem *Haganah* had mobilized 500 men and women on a full-time basis. Most had received some form of military training.<sup>45</sup> By May 1948, the *Haganah* fielded two brigades under a unified command in the Jerusalem area: the *Etzioni* or Sixth Brigade, with some 2,750 troops, in the city itself; and the *Palmach's Harel* or Tenth Brigade, of about the same strength, in the environs.<sup>46</sup> Many *Haganah* soldiers had served in British units in World War II, and others had received special training in guerilla tactics and night fighting. As already witnessed, *Irgun* and *Lehi* fighters, who were grouped disproportionately in Jerusalem, were trained and prepared for conflict from the earliest stages of the fighting.<sup>47</sup>

Hagit Shlonsky's experience illustrates how the Zionist forces in Jerusalem, as elsewhere in Palestine, had prepared themselves for the outbreak of war. She was approached and recruited by the *Haganah* while still in high school in Jerusalem, an occurrence that students considered an honor. Once a week throughout 1947, she and other *Haganah* youth met after school in a secret location and learned how to use weapons. "We were prepared for a war," Shlonsky remembered. "We were sure that the Arabs who surrounded us would attack and that we would have to defend ourselves."<sup>48</sup>

The highly motivated Zionist forces had been indoctrinated with the idea that nationhood transcends the individual, the family, and all other considerations. The Hebrew University was a fertile recruiting ground. Tikva Honig-Parnass, then a student of seventeen, recalled her enlistment:

I enlisted in the *Haganah* already in November. It was well known on campus who was a member of the *Haganah*, and a friend and I went to the student office and joined up. Most students were members, and enlisting was the culmination of everything I had been brought up to believe in. We had fought to achieve what we had, it was now in danger, and it was up to me to protect it. In that discourse there was no notion of attacking or being the aggressors, only defending ourselves and what we had built.<sup>49</sup>

Although the Zionist forces were generally well centralized and unified, friction was always present between the *Haganah* and the more ideologically right-wing *Irgun* and *Lehi*. The latter forces enjoyed widespread support in Jerusalem, especially in the poorer, predominantly *Mizrahi* neighbourhoods where people had less contact with the mainstream, predominantly *Ashkenazi* Zionist leadership.<sup>50</sup> Still, the three

groups achieved notable operational coordination. In a dispatch to London on December 15, 1947, British High Commissioner Cunningham detailed the close cooperation between the *Haganah* and what he called the ‘dissident’ groups of the *Irgun* and the *Lehi*.<sup>51</sup> In analyzing the relationship between the actions of the three forces, Simha Flapan discerned that, following *Irgun* and *Lehi* raids and bombings, “a pattern became clear, for in each case the Arabs retaliated, then the *Haganah*—while always condemning the actions of the *Irgun* and *Lehi*—joined in with an inflaming ‘counterretaliation.’”<sup>52</sup>

'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini soon realized that his forces were insufficient to conquer Jewish settlements and neighbourhoods, so he concentrated his efforts on severing Jewish communication lines to Jerusalem. He and his troops, along with the sporadic assistance of people from nearby villages, consistently and successfully ambushed Jewish convoys. By March, very few convoys were able to pass through Bab al-Wad, the entrance through the hills to Jerusalem. Inside the city of Jerusalem, al-Huseini's fighters launched a string of bombings against Jewish, primarily civilian, targets. In February and March, dozens of Jews were killed by TNT-laden cars and trucks on Ben Yehuda Street, the Jewish Agency building and at the offices of the *Palestine Post* newspaper.

Concerning British behavior towards the Zionist and Palestinian Arab forces, historians have analyzed the phenomenon in Palestine as a whole but have not devoted adequate attention to the special case of Jerusalem. Consistent with elsewhere in Palestine, it seems that the British had no clear-cut policy in Jerusalem towards the end of their Mandate. Decisions to assist or refuse to help either side were apparently often at the discretion of the British officer on hand. Arms and information were provided through the back door to both *Haganah* and Palestinian Arab forces. Some have asserted the bias of British soldiers because they assisted in repulsing Arab attacks on Jewish neighbourhoods, as occurred in Mevor Hayim, in fixing the water pipelines flowing to Jewish neighbourhoods after they were exploded by Arab militia and in handing over key installations to Zionist forces.<sup>53</sup> Others have countered with examples of British non-intervention in the face of attacking Arab forces, as with the constant ambushes on Jewish convoys in the Jerusalem corridor. Still others believe that the British, while concentrating on the withdrawal of their administration and troops, were content to let Jew and Arab fight it out among themselves. All of the viewpoints appear valid in part. As will be seen, however, British non-intervention in West Jerusalem eventually enabled the Zionists to implement their strategy of driving out Palestinian Arabs and conquering their neighbourhoods.<sup>54</sup> Another key factor was that the British prevented the Arab armies from attacking *Haganah* positions in Jerusalem and elsewhere before the end of the Mandate.<sup>55</sup>

## The Initial Evacuation of Arab Neighbourhoods

With the outbreak of fighting, Jews began to leave the mixed neighbourhoods where they, for the most part, were renting homes from Arab landlords. The *Haganah* saw this as a serious problem, for it regarded each neighbourhood as a military post, and its resident population as a reserve fighting force. Its strategy for dealing with Jewish abandonment was to forbid all Jews to leave their area of residence without permission. Furthermore, the Jewish neighbourhood committees compelled residents to continue to pay tax, even after they evacuated, and refused to take responsibility for the property left behind.<sup>56</sup> But when these measures proved ineffectual and Jews continued to depart, Israel Amir, the *Haganah* commander in Jerusalem, decided to drive Arabs completely out of these neighbourhoods and to push them from a few small enclaves in predominantly Jewish neighbourhoods.

The *Haganah* first tried to pressure Arab residents to vacate these areas through psychological warfare. *Haganah* members issued threats via posters, notes, and phone calls to the Arab neighbourhood leaders. Next, in order to create a general air of insecurity, *Haganah* raiding parties infiltrated the neighbourhoods to sever phone lines and electricity wires, throw hand grenades, and fire into the air.<sup>57</sup> In addition, they blew up buildings on the pretext that they served as bases for Arab military actions.

Clearing Lifta, Romeima and Sheikh Badr of their Arab residents was given top priority, as these villages were strategically located at the city's entrance on the main road to Tel Aviv. The *Haganah* and *Irgun* waged a series of attacks on Lifta, including a machine gun and grenade attack at a cafe on December 28, 1947 that left seven people dead. Most residents left the village very soon thereafter, and the rest departed after Zionist forces blew up several houses.<sup>58</sup> Arabs in Romeima and Sheikh Badr were forced out of their homes in early January 1948.<sup>59</sup> The course of events leading to Sheikh Badr's evacuation are described in a British intelligence report:

After a day of Arab sniping, the *Haganah*, on 11 January, "took the matter into their own hands and blew up the house of Hajj Sulayman Hamini, the village mukhtar." A second raid followed on 13 January, with some 20 houses being damaged, and the suburb, after receiving a *Haganah* order, was evacuated. On 16 January, Sheikh Badr was looted by a Jewish crowd.<sup>60</sup>

The *Haganah*'s bombing campaign included a devastating explosion in Qatamon's Semiramis Hotel on January 4, 1948, which killed twenty-six civilians. Most of the dead were members of two Christian Arab families of Jerusalem; one

was a Spanish diplomat.<sup>61</sup> The *Haganah*, hoping to justify the bombing, claimed that the hotel doubled as an Arab military installation. However, a British Mandate investigation into the bombing found the allegation “entirely without foundation,” and described the operation as the “wholesale murder of innocent people.”<sup>62</sup> Even a Jewish Agency report describing the bombing and its impact belied the *Haganah* claim:

The Arabs living in the prosperous western district of Qatamon began evacuating their homes after the *Haganah* bombing of the Semiramis Hotel on the night of 4-5 January 1948. The *Haganah* suspected, mistakenly, that the hotel served as the headquarters of the local irregulars. Several Arab families, and the Spanish consul in the city, died in the explosion, and a sharp dispute broke out inside the *Haganah* and with the British authorities...The bombing caused major panic in Qatamon. Many flats were evacuated, but ... only by women, the old and children. The young men stayed.<sup>63</sup>

Hala Sakakini, then a young woman living in Qatamon, described the mayhem in her neighbourhood following the Hotel Semiramis bombing:

All day long you could see people carrying their belongings and moving from their houses to safer ones in Qatamon or to another quarter altogether. They reminded us of pictures we used to see of European refugees during the war. People were simply panic-stricken. The rumor spread that leaflets had been dropped by the Jews saying that they would make out of Qatamon one heap of rubble. Whenever we saw people moving away we tried to encourage them to stay. We would tell them: “You ought to be ashamed to leave. This is just what the Jews want you to do; you leave and they occupy your houses and then one day you will find that Qatamon has become another Jewish quarter!”<sup>64</sup>

The *Haganah* proceeded to bomb many private Arab residences in Qatamon.<sup>65</sup> Sami Hadawi, who also lived in Qatamon, said that although fourteen buildings were blown up around his house, he remained in the neighbourhood.<sup>66</sup> Another resident recalled that, after the Semiramis bombing, his father prepared the family to leave for a safer place. Ibrahim Abu Dayyeh, the head of the Qatamon resistance, approached his father and entreated him to stay, saying that if his family—one of the few Muslim families in the neighbourhood—left, more would follow suit. So they held on in the neighbourhood for the time being.<sup>67</sup>

The situation of Jerusalem's Arabs was dire. On January 13, 1948, Husein al-Khalidi informed the Mufti of the crisis in Jerusalem: "The position here is very difficult. There are no people, no discipline, no arms, and no ammunition. Over and above this, there is no tinned food and no foodstuffs. The black market is flourishing. The economy is destroyed ... This is the real situation, there is no flour, no food ... Jerusalem is emptying out."<sup>68</sup> In January, practically all the wealthy Palestinian Arab residents of West Jerusalem fled from the neighbourhoods of Qatamon, Deir Abu Tor, and Baq'a.<sup>69</sup> They had the means to travel and reside outside Jerusalem or abroad and intended to return when the fighting subsided.

The *Haganah* and *Lehi* also carried out military operations against neighbourhoods and villages like Beit Safafa, Silwan, and Sheikh Jarah. *Sherut Yediot (SHY)* reports painted a picture of despair, fear, and abandonment among these Arab villages and also among front-line neighbourhoods like Musrara.<sup>70</sup>

Concomitant with the *Haganah's* campaign to clear Arabs from their West Jerusalem neighbourhoods was the Jewish settling of their homes. The first area to be settled was Sheikh Badr by those Jews who had been displaced from their neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, such as Shimon HaTzadik. Prior to this, as mentioned in the above British intelligence report, the village had been looted by Jewish residents of Nahlaot. By January 28, twenty-five Jewish families had moved into Sheikh Badr.<sup>71</sup> Golan describes how various committees established by the *Haganah* and the Jewish Agency pressured these families into settling the neighbourhood:

It was not easy for the Housing Committee to convince [the Jewish refugees from Shimon HaTzadik] to leave the *Kol Yisrael Chaverim* institutions [where they were sheltered] and to be housed in Sheikh Badr [...] According to the testimony of Chaya Buton, a Housing Committee worker, sanctions were imposed on them like cutting off support given them by the Social Department of the Community Committee, and when that did not work they were forcibly loaded onto trucks and transferred to Sheikh Badr.<sup>72</sup>

Ben-Gurion keenly followed the dual process of evacuation and settlement. On February 5, 1948, he ordered the new *Haganah* commander of Jerusalem, David Shaltiel, to conquer and settle Jews in Arab districts.<sup>73</sup> Appearing before the Mapai Council two days later, Ben-Gurion reported:

From your entry into Jerusalem, through Lifta, Romeima ... there are no Arabs. One hundred percent Jews. Since Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, it has not been so Jewish as it is now. In

many Arab neighbourhoods in the west one sees not a single Arab. I do not assume that this will change ... What has happened in Jerusalem ... is likely to happen in many parts of the country ... in the six, eight or ten months of the campaign there will certainly be great changes in the composition of the population of the country.<sup>74</sup>

An estimated 30,000 Palestinian Arabs evacuated Jerusalem, Haifa and some villages near the Mediterranean coast between January and March 1948.<sup>75</sup> By March, the neighbourhoods of Jerusalem—except for the Jewish Quarter in the otherwise Arab Old City—were exclusively Arab or Jewish, with virtually no communication between them.<sup>76</sup>

### **Plan Dalet and Operation Nachshon**

As mentioned, during the first months of 1948 the local forces of Palestinian irregulars and militiamen, led by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini, concentrated their efforts on cutting off Jewish Jerusalem from the coastal plain by attacking Jewish convoys travelling along the narrow Jerusalem corridor. In March they also began to sabotage the water supplies flowing to the Jewish neighbourhoods and to surround the city.<sup>77</sup> By late March, Jewish Jerusalem was effectively under siege, deprived of food, water, and basic services.<sup>78</sup>

The *Haganah*'s Operation *Nachshon*, designed to break the siege, began on April 6, 1948. This operation was in the framework of *Plan Dalet*, which had been in preparation since 1944.<sup>79</sup> The largest Jewish offensive to date, *Plan Dalet* aimed to enlarge the boundaries allotted to the Jewish state and simultaneously conquer dozens of villages from which the Palestinian Arab inhabitants would be expelled.<sup>80</sup> According to Benny Morris, Operation *Nachshon* was “a watershed, characterized by an intention and effort to clear a whole area, permanently, of Arab villages and hostile or potentially hostile Arab villagers.”<sup>81</sup> During Operation *Nachshon*, Yitzhak Rabin was an officer in the *Palmach*'s Harel Brigade whose mission was to raze the Palestinian villages—from Beit Mahsir in the west to Qalunya and Qastal in the east—which 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini relied upon for support.<sup>82</sup> Rabin later said, “By not leaving stone on stone and driving all the people away, and without those villages, the Arab bands were not going to be able to operate effectively anymore.”<sup>83</sup> Tikva Honig-Parnass, a *Palmach* soldier who participated in Operation *Nachshon*, recalled her commander saying that the Zionist positions in and around Jerusalem could only hold out for another three weeks. To her, Operation *Nachshon* was totally justified on defensive grounds. “They are attacking us. They are disconnecting us. So we have to wipe them out,” she remembers thinking.<sup>84</sup> Most Zionist soldiers, it would appear, saw Operation *Nachshon* as a purely defensive

measure and were oblivious to the existence of prior plans to go on the offensive with the goal of territorial expansion.

The Jewish Agency leadership, however, had long prepared for, and even counted on, such a window of opportunity to widen the Jerusalem corridor. On February 6, 1948, Ben-Gurion had told the *Mapai* Party Council that “without populating the Jerusalem mountains and the hills [surrounding] the coastal plains ... I am doubtful whether we would be able to maintain the link with Jerusalem,” and therefore that “it is necessary to be in [to settle] the mountains.” When one audience member objected that “we have no land there” [in the hills and mountains], Ben-Gurion replied: “The war will give us the land. The concept of ‘ours’ and ‘not ours’ are peace concepts, only, and in war they lose their whole meaning.”<sup>85</sup>

Prior to Operation *Nachshon*, according to accounts written by Nathan Weinstock and jointly by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Haganah* intelligence approached Fawzi al-Qawuqji, the Liberation Army commander, and received his assurance that he would not come to the aid of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini's forces.<sup>86</sup> During an attempt on April 7 to retake the village of Qastal, al-Huseini was killed, resulting in a huge blow to Arab morale. On the impact of al-Huseini's death, al-Qawuqji wrote: “The death of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Huseini has caused confusion in the whole area.”<sup>87</sup>

## The Deir Yasin Massacre

As their contribution to Operation *Nachshon*, the *Irgun* and *Lehi* planned an attack on the village of Deir Yasin, strategically located a mile west of the Jerusalem suburbs, close to the highway leading into the Jerusalem corridor. Deir Yasin was one of several Arab villages in the area that had already concluded non-belligerency agreements with Jewish Jerusalem.<sup>88</sup> Deir Yasin's particular agreement was made in February 1948, and the villagers had been assured that, in return for their readiness to collaborate with the *Haganah*, they and their village would be spared.<sup>89</sup> In keeping with their part of the bargain, Deir Yasin residents had driven out an Arab military group that had wanted to use their village as a base.<sup>90</sup>

In his book *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, Michael Palumbo provides evidence that the *Irgun* and *Lehi* not only intended to vanquish the village but to commit a massacre. Benzion Cohen, the *Irgun* commander of the raid, noted that at the pre-attack meeting “the majority was for liquidation of all the men in the village and any others found that opposed us, whether it be old people, women and children.”<sup>91</sup> Also, according to the *Irgun* officer Yehuda Lapidot, the *Lehi* “forwarded a proposal to liquidate the residents of the village after the conquest to show the Arabs what happens when the *Irgun* and Stern Gang [*Lehi*] set out together on an operation.”<sup>92</sup>

There is record of prior *Haganah* knowledge of the attack. The following memo was sent from the Jerusalem *Haganah* Commander David Shaltiel to Mordechai Ranaan and Yehoshua Zetler, Jerusalem commanders of the *Irgun* and *Lehi* respectively:

I learn that you plan an attack on Deir Yasin. I wish to point out that the capture of Deir Yasin and its holding are one stage in our general plan. I have no objection in you carrying out the operation provided you are able to hold the village.<sup>93</sup>

Shaltiel implored them to totally conquer and occupy the village at the first attempt because a second attack on a fortified Deir Yasin would cost many more Jewish lives.<sup>94</sup> The *Haganah* provided rifles and hand grenades for the action, which was code-named ‘Operation Unity’ as a symbol of cooperation between the three Zionist forces.<sup>95</sup> Altogether, 120 men took part in the initial attack on April 9, 1948, which Jacques de Reynier, the International Red Cross’ Chief Delegate in Jerusalem, reported was “without any military reason or provocation of any kind.”<sup>96</sup> According to Meir Pa’il, a *Haganah* officer who said he joined the attack as an “observer,” the Zionists encountered resistance from a dozen villagers using old rifles. The attackers had only captured the eastern half of the village, and Pa’il summoned help from the *Haganah*. A *Palmach* platoon soon arrived and easily occupied the rest of the village, after which the *Palmach* troops withdrew.<sup>97</sup> The *Palestine Post* of April 13, 1948 simply stated that the *Palmach* “provided covering fire” during Operation Unity while, according to *Irgun* and *Lehi* sources, a *Palmach* unit shelled Deir Yasin with a mortar.<sup>98</sup> After the *Palmach* unit’s withdrawal, apparently, the massacre began.<sup>99</sup>

Benny Morris tersely summarizes the massacre as follows:

After a prolonged firefight, in which Arab family after family were slaughtered, the dissidents rounded up many of the remaining villagers, who included militiamen and unarmed civilians of both sexes, and children, and murdered dozens of them.<sup>100</sup>

However, many of the scores of Deir Yasin villagers massacred were reportedly killed following the firefight.<sup>101</sup> A survivor, Fahmi Zeidan, described the slaughter of his family:

The Jews ordered all our family to line up against the wall and they started shooting us. I was hit in the side, but most of us children

were saved because we hid behind our parents. The bullets hit my sister Kadri [four] in the head, my sister Sameh [eight] in the cheek, my brother Mohammed [seven] in the chest. But all the others with us against the wall were killed: my father, my mother, my grandfather and grandmother, my uncles and aunts and some of their children.<sup>102</sup>

Haleem Eid, then thirty years old, said she saw “a man shoot a bullet into the neck of my sister Salhiyah who was nine months pregnant. Then he cut her stomach open with a butcher’s knife.” She said that another woman witnessing the same scene, Aiesch Radwas, was killed when she tried to remove the unborn infant from the dead mother’s womb.<sup>103</sup> Many survivors described the savagery of killing, rape, and looting. In addition, *Irgun* and *Lehi* fighters dynamited many houses.

According to Benny Morris, the horrors of the massacre were “amplified and exaggerated in the Arab retelling.”<sup>104</sup> However, another Israeli historian, Uri Milstein, states that fabrications stemmed mainly from “various elements on the Jewish side.”<sup>105</sup> Still, it is hard to conjure up more savage tales than those of the survivors themselves. Assistant Inspector General Richard C. Catling of the Criminal Investigation Division included one such shocking account in a report he filed on April 15, 1948 to the British Palestine Government:

On 14 April at 10 am, I visited Silwan village accompanied by a doctor and a nurse from the Government Hospital in Jerusalem and a member of the Arab Women’s Union. We visited many houses in this village in which approximately some two to three hundred people from Deir Yasin village are housed. I interviewed many of the women folk in order to glean some information on any atrocities committed in Deir Yasin but the majority of these women are very shy and reluctant to relate their experiences especially in matters concerning sexual assault and they need great coaxing before they will divulge any information. The recording of statements is hampered also by the hysterical state of the women who often break down many times whilst the statement is being recorded. There is, however, no doubt that many sexual atrocities were committed by attacking Jews. Many young schoolgirls were raped and later slaughtered. Old women were also molested. One story is current concerning a case in which a young girl was literally torn in two. Many infants were also butchered and killed. I also saw one old woman who gave her age as one hundred and four, who had been

severely beaten about the head by rifle butts. Women had bracelets torn from their arms and rings from their fingers and parts of some of the women's ears were severed in order to remove earrings.<sup>106</sup>

According to a former *Lehi* intelligence officer, one attacker “took two Arabs, tied them back to back, and placed a dynamite “finger” between their heads, then shot at the dynamite and their heads exploded.”<sup>107</sup>

Jacques de Reynier arrived at Deir Yasin the day after the massacre. The victims' corpses were strewn about, and the village was still occupied by the *Irgun* and *Lehi* fighters, who were engaged in what de Reynier called “cleaning up” operations or, plainly speaking, executions. De Reynier's assessment of the incident at Deir Yasin was that the villagers “had been deliberately massacred in cold blood for, as I observed for myself, this gang was admirably disciplined and only acted under orders.”<sup>108</sup>

Survivors of the massacre were paraded, hands forced above their heads, through the streets of Jewish-held Jerusalem, said Eliyahu Arieli, the commander of the *Haganah* force which moved into Deir Yasin following the massacre.<sup>109</sup> Meir Pail, the *Haganah* “observer,” recounted that, after parading a group of twenty-five men, *Irgun* and *Lehi* members “put them in a line in some kind of quarry, and shot them.”<sup>110</sup> According to Arieli, “All of the killed, with very few exceptions, were old men, women and children [...] the dead we found were all unjust victims and none of them had died with a weapon in their hands.”<sup>111</sup> After the massacre, Zionist forces took the bodies of the victims to Deir Yasin's rock quarry, poured gasoline on them and set them alight.<sup>112</sup>

The *Haganah* command distanced itself from the massacre to maintain the image of a force committed to ‘purity of arms’ and avoid the risk of moral dissonance within its ranks. As former *Palmach* soldier Tikva Honig-Parnass recalls, “We in the *Haganah* saw this as an inhumane, terrible act by the right wing. It wasn't us, we told ourselves. It wasn't part of any plan. It was those right-wing devils. Not by us, the pure. I never had any doubt about our purity.”<sup>113</sup> On April 10, 1948, Jerusalem *Haganah* commander Shaltiel issued a communiqué in effect disclaiming *Haganah* participation in—and implying that he had no prior knowledge of—the attack:

This morning, the last *Lehi* and *Etzel* [*Irgun*] soldiers ran from Deir Yasin and our soldiers entered the village. We were forced to take command of the village after the splinter forces [*Irgun* and *Lehi* members] opened a new enemy front and then fled, leaving the western neighbourhoods of the city open to enemy attack.<sup>114</sup>

Enraged by Shaltiel's hypocrisy, Ranaan and Zetler made public his earlier memo to them in which he approved the attack.<sup>115</sup>

In what they claimed was retaliation for Deir Yasin, Palestinian Arab fighters attacked a Jewish medical convoy on its way to Hadassah hospital on Mount Scopus on April 14.<sup>116</sup> The convoy, which was ambushed in Sheikh Jarrah, included doctors, nurses, Irgun fighters wounded at Deir Yasin, and *Haganah* escorts.<sup>117</sup> The British Army, though fully aware of the ensuing battle, waited six hours before intervening.<sup>118</sup> By then seventy-six Jews, including forty medical staff, had been killed, some as they tried to escape their burning vehicles.<sup>119</sup> Fourteen Arabs were also shot dead.<sup>120</sup>

### **The Zionist Conquest and Looting of Qatamon**

The Deir Yasin massacre terrorized the entire Palestinian Arab population, particularly those living in and around Jerusalem. As Hala Sakakini of Qatamon wrote:

Lately, ever since the massacre at Deir Yasin, we have been thinking seriously of leaving Jerusalem. The most terrible stories have been received from eyewitnesses who have escaped from this unbelievable massacre. I never thought the Jews could be so cruel, so barbarous, so brutal. Pregnant women and children were tortured to death, young women were stripped naked, humiliated and driven through the Jewish Quarters to be spit upon by the crowds. The "civilized" Jews are not ashamed of their crime at all and we know that they are capable of repeating it whenever and wherever possible. One day, perhaps very soon, we may be forced to leave our house. I don't like to think of it.<sup>121</sup>

De Reynier observed that "a general terror was built up among the Arabs, a terror astutely fostered by the Jews."<sup>122</sup> *Haganah* radio repeated incessantly "Remember Deir Yasin" as an ominous warning to Arab listeners. In addition, loudspeaker vans broadcast messages in Arabic such as: "Unless you leave your homes the fate of Deir Yasin will be your fate."<sup>123</sup>

Despite the AHC National Committee of Jerusalem's order to the Arab population to stay put on pain of punishment, the massacre immediately provoked a mass flight of Palestinian Arabs from Jerusalem and the surrounding villages.<sup>124</sup> According to Morris, Deir Yasin "probably had the most lasting effect of any single event of the war in precipitating the flight of Arab villagers from Palestine."<sup>125</sup> And Palumbo writes that "the fear generated by the news of the massacre made

many peasants vulnerable to intimidation when their village was invaded by Zionist forces.”<sup>126</sup> While it is important to keep in mind the psychological impact of Deir Yasin, it is also significant that many Palestinian Arabs did not budge or, when possible, returned to their homes after a few days, as in the case of Beit Safafa.<sup>127</sup>

David Kroyanker remembers, as a child, witnessing the abandonment of Talbiya:

I lived not far from here [Talbiya]. Deir Yasin had a huge influence on the evacuation of Talbiya. The Arabs were scared to death. They left their meals on their tables and the *Haganah* requested people in our neighbourhood to clean the houses so that Jews could move into them. There really were meals still on the tables. The Arabs thought it was a matter of two or three days before they would return to their homes, as had happened in 1936 and 1939.<sup>128</sup>

However, return to the southwestern neighbourhoods of Jerusalem was perilous due to fierce fighting.

In the wake of Operation *Nachshon* and the Deir Yasin massacre, the *Haganah* General Command was poised to take control of West Jerusalem and much of East Jerusalem, excluding the areas under British control. This was among the goals of Operation *Yevussi*, carried out by the *Haganah*'s *Etzioni* Brigade and *Palmach* units as of April 27.

The neighbourhood of Qatamon lay at the center of Zionist plans to conquer West Jerusalem. Qatamon was strategically located on a hill, and the Arab forces knew that its fall would signify their defeat in West Jerusalem. As a precursor to its attack on Qatamon, the Zionist forces subjected the neighbourhood to weeks of heavy artillery shelling.<sup>129</sup> In preparation for a big battle, on April 22 the Palestinian National Committee of Jerusalem ordered its local branches to relocate all women, children and elderly people from the neighbourhoods.<sup>130</sup> The Battle of Qatamon, which began on April 30, lasted for three days and resulted in the deaths of 150 Arabs.<sup>131</sup> Following the neighbourhood's occupation, a Red Cross physician discovered in a cave the bodies of a number of Arabs who had been killed. According to the physician, “a group of bodies was piled in a heap, including soldiers, women and even a mule.” A *Haganah* officer on the scene refused to help the doctor carry away the bodies.<sup>132</sup>

The Zionist conquest of Qatamon was accompanied by widespread looting of the neighbourhood's Arab homes. Many Palestinians who fled West Jerusalem lost all their belongings. As UN Mediator Count Folke Bernadotte noted:

[...] while those who had fled in the early days of the conflict had

been able to take with them some personal effects and assets, many of the latecomers were deprived of everything except the clothes in which they stood, and apart from their homes (many of which were destroyed) lost all furniture and assets and even their tools of trade.<sup>133</sup>

Some Qatamon residents stood and watched from a nearby vantage point as their property was loaded onto trucks and driven off to an unknown destination.<sup>134</sup> Hagit Shlonsky provided an eyewitness account of the Qatamon looting:

I remember the looting in Qatamon very well. I was a first aid nurse stationed in the *Beit Havra'a Etzion* [military convalescence center] in Qatamon. The convalescence center was located in two large Arab buildings. One night a soldier took me out and showed me around the neighbourhood. I was stunned by the beauty of the houses. I went into one house—it was beautiful, with a piano, and carpets, and wonderful chandeliers.

At the time my family lived in Rehavia on a street that was on the way to other Jewish neighbourhoods from Qatamon. For days you could see people walking by carrying looted goods. I would stare through the window of our apartment and see dozens of people walking past with the loot. This was connected to the visit I had made with the soldier to the house in Qatamon because I knew what treasures lay in those houses. I saw them walking by for days. Not only soldiers, civilians as well. They were looting like mad. They were even carrying dining tables. And it was in broad daylight, so everyone could see.

One soldier wanted to please me, and brought me a handkerchief and earrings. I was flattered, but he didn't tell me he had looted them. He just brought them to me as a gift. When I showed them to my father, he looked at me and said, "Throw it away! How dare you take anything!" Only then I made the connection between those people on the street and what the soldier had given me.

In our family, because my father was so outraged by the looting, we all talked about it a lot. But otherwise I didn't hear about it from anybody. It took many years till people started talking and writing about it.<sup>135</sup>

On May 16, the Zionist forces took over Baq'a, an event described in his memoirs

by John Rose, an Armenian Jerusalemite who remained in the neighbourhood:

There was no resistance of any sort; they just walked in, gradually taking over buildings in strategic places. Nearly every house was empty: set tables with plates of unfinished food indicated that the occupants had fled in disarray, haste and fear. In some kitchens cooking stoves had been left alight, reducing the ingredients of a waiting meal to blackened remains.<sup>136</sup>

After the fall of the Arab neighbourhoods of West Jerusalem, only about 750 non-Jews remained in the area.<sup>137</sup> Of these, many were Greeks who were allowed to continue living in their houses in the German Colony and the Greek Colony. Almost all the Arabs—most of whom were Christian—were concentrated by the Jewish forces into Upper Baq'a.<sup>138</sup>

Later on, in June, Jewish residents of Jerusalem took advantage of a formal cease-fire (described below) to loot the empty Arab homes in Baq'a. According to John Rose, who was one of those confined to Baq'a:

Our movements were restricted but Jewish residents from the western suburbs and elsewhere were allowed to circulate freely. During this time looting of Arab houses started on a fantastic scale, accompanied by wholesale vindictive destruction of property. First it was the army who broke into the houses, searching for people and for equipment that they could use. Next came those in search of food, after which valuables and personal effects were taken. From our verandah we saw horse-drawn carts as well as pick-up trucks laden with pianos, refrigerators, radios, paintings, ornaments and furniture, some wrapped in valuable Persian carpets [...] Safes with money and jewelry were pried open and emptied. The loot was transported for private use or for sale in West Jerusalem. To us this was most upsetting. Our friends' houses were being ransacked and we were powerless to intervene.

[...] This state of affairs continued for months. Latecomers made do with what remained to be pillaged. They pried off ceramic tiles from bathroom walls and removed all electric switches and wiring, kitchen gadgets, waterpipes and fittings. Nothing escaped: lofts and cellars were broken into, doors and windows hacked down, floor tiles removed in search of hidden treasures. Rooms were littered with piles of rubbish and as winter set in rain poured into these

derelict houses. At night the wind howled and the banging of windows and doors echoed through the lifeless buildings, a haunting sound in an already ghostly scene. It was unbearable to pass these houses, so familiar, but now within six months become so strange, with overgrown gardens, front doors and windows smashed or wide open and above all void of their inhabitants. We lived in the middle of a sea of destruction.<sup>139</sup>

## **The British Withdrawal and the Israeli Declaration of Independence**

On the third and fourth of May, the Arab Liberation Army pounded West Jerusalem with heavy artillery, hitting *Haganah* positions, ammunition stores, and electricity and water centers. Then the British intervened. Fawzi al-Qawuqji recorded: “The British warned that they would attack our guns with planes if we bombarded Jerusalem a third time.” He also mentioned that at the same time there were “British armored cars guarding Nabi Yaqub and Qalandia settlements [next to Jerusalem] all day.”<sup>140</sup>

As the British prepared the final details for their departure from Palestine scheduled for May 14, the UN attempted, albeit weakly, to step in to implement the partition resolution. In late April, the UN Trusteeship Council proposed either placing Jerusalem under international trusteeship or managing the city with a UN-controlled force of 1,000 police. The AHC, wanting to avoid tacit recognition of the partition plan, rejected both proposals.<sup>141</sup> The AHC also shunned the UN Commission for Palestine, established to administer Palestine in the transition period after the Mandate.<sup>142</sup> Still, unlike the Jewish Agency, the Arabs, including the AHC, were interested in discussing the arrangement of a truce in Jerusalem. On May 7, Arab League Secretary-General Azzam Pasha agreed with British High Commissioner Sir Alan Cunningham to a limited truce in Jerusalem. When the Jewish Agency refused to send high-ranking officials to discuss the truce with the UN Consular Truce Commission, the commission imposed a cease-fire the next day. The Jewish Agency then refused to negotiate to extend the truce, which only lasted a few days.<sup>143</sup> On May 14, UN representatives, including the Assistant Principal Secretary of the Palestine Commission, Pablo de Azcarate, made repeated efforts to telephone Jewish Agency officials in Jerusalem in the hope of mediating a truce. The circumstances are related in his book *Mission in Palestine*:

The Jews, already perfectly organized, were carrying out methodically their plan to seize the whole of modern Jerusalem and were naturally very far from thinking of suspending, far less

abandoning, the execution of this plan in deference to our telephone calls; and I do not think it would have been very wide off the mark to say that with their passive resistance to a cease-fire in the zone which the Arab delegates would have to cross in order to reach the French Consulate [in which the UN representatives were waiting], they rendered all negotiation impossible without incurring the responsibility of a blank refusal. The so-called Arab forces were then “irregulars,” indifferently controlled by improvised leaders under the nominal authority of the Arab Higher Committee. Possibly, at that moment they would have been glad of a suspension of hostilities and their explanation that the Jewish forces, by their fire, were preventing their delegate from reaching the French Consulate was sincere. Should this be so, one can but pay a tribute of admiration to the ingenuity of the Jewish leaders who appeared to be giving the greatest facilities for a settlement in which they were not interested and which they themselves rendered impossible.<sup>144</sup>

The *Haganah*'s plan to capture all Jerusalem outside the Old City, referred to by de Azcarate was named Operation *Kilshon* [Pitchfork]. Begun May 13, its objective was a three-pronged advance through Arab or mixed zones to the south, north or center of Jerusalem, to create a solid Jewish area embracing all of western Jerusalem up to the Old City wall, and the capture of Sheikh Jarrah to link up with the isolated Jewish stronghold on Mount Scopus.<sup>145</sup> An essential aspect of the plan was the occupation of 'Bevingrad,' the central British security zone to the Old City's west, including the Russian Compound, General Post Office and other strategic buildings. With great ease the *Haganah* took Bevingrad, due partly to the collusion of the British forces. The night before the evacuation of their remaining troops, British officers permitted *Haganah* patrols to enter the area. Therefore, when the British troops departed from Bevingrad at noon on May 14, the occupation by the *Haganah* took only ten minutes.<sup>146</sup> Former Palestinian Arab fighter in Jerusalem Abdullah Budeiri claims that he and his comrades had precise information, via a British informer, regarding the British withdrawal from Bevingrad, but lacked sufficient troops to cover the area. *Haganah* soldiers succeeded in extending their control over 'Bevingrad' into western Musrara, giving them a strategic vantage point over Arab East Jerusalem's commercial district.

On May 14 the British also secured the *Haganah*'s occupation of the strategically positioned Villa Harun al-Rashid in Talbiya, which towered over the neighbourhood.<sup>147</sup> The villa served as the command base for the Royal Air Force,

and was a site from which Arab forces could potentially launch an attack on Rehavia, home to most of the Zionist institutions, or conversely, from which the *Haganah* could prevent one. An Israeli journalist wrote that “on the eve of the British evacuation in 1948, [Mandate] officials agreed the *Haganah* could have the keys [to the villa]. But they still had to get in without letting the Iraqis know. So, as the British vacated the house from the front door, the Jews infiltrated through the back.”<sup>148</sup>

The occupation of the Arab neighbourhoods south of Talbiya by the Zionist forces was swift for, in de Azcarate’s words, “hardly had the last English soldier disappeared than the Jews launched their offensive, consolidating their possession of Qatamon and seizing the German Colony and the other southern districts of Jerusalem.”<sup>149</sup>

On the afternoon of the same day, May 14, Ben-Gurion declared “the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called Israel.” Israel had no defined boundaries, a point of contention for the state’s founders. Ben-Gurion later wrote: “There arose the question of whether the Declaration ought to restrict itself to the framework of the United Nations decision or whether it should merely be based on the decision [...] I was opposed to specifying the borders.”<sup>150</sup> By a vote of five to four the Jewish Agency leadership decided not to delineate Israel’s borders in the declaration.<sup>151</sup> Still, there was no doubt in Ben-Gurion’s mind that Jerusalem was part and parcel of the State of Israel, as he told the provisional government on May 24:

With regard to the question of whether Jerusalem is within the boundaries of the state or not, at present there are only factual areas controlled by the Jewish army. Until peace is attained and the areas are determined by international accord and with the agreement of the concerned parties, we are speaking of areas controlled by the Jewish government—at present, unfortunately, without the Old City—just like Tel Aviv, there is no distinction between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Haifa, Hanita, and Bir Asluj. They are all within the boundaries of the Jewish State.<sup>152</sup>

## **The Arab Legion**

Upon Ben-Gurion’s declaration of independence, Transjordan—along with Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq—declared war on the new state. With the Israeli forces’ increasingly entrenched hold upon West Jerusalem and their impending attack on the Old City, Palestinian Arabs saw in Transjordan’s Arab Legion one last opportunity to tip the scales.

The Arab Legion, Transjordan’s well-trained troops commanded by John Bagot

Glubb, already had a presence in Jerusalem. Immediately prior to the end of the British Mandate on May 14, Major Abdullah al-Tal, who commanded the Arab Legion forces in the Jerusalem area, appealed to Glubb to leave at least one Arab Legion company in Jerusalem to hold the Arab lines and to aid the Palestinian Arab irregular soldiers. But Glubb, trying his best to avoid open conflict with the Israelis, pulled every Arab Legion soldier out of Jerusalem by May 13.<sup>153</sup>

After the declaration of war, Arab Legion troops returned to Jerusalem but due to Glubb's policy of non-involvement, remained on the city's outskirts. The Israelis, meanwhile, were on the offensive. In the words of an American journalist stationed in Jerusalem, "Israeli soldiers pushed as far and as fast as they could in the first hectic days of battle. They stopped when the resistance became too heavy."<sup>154</sup> In the wake of the Israeli onslaught, Palestinian Arabs dug their heels into East Jerusalem. On May 15, Jerusalem Arab Radio broadcast "Those who spread alarming rumors inciting the population to evacuate must be arrested," and *Haganah* Radio announced that "the [AHC] National Committee was refusing to give visas to anyone wishing to leave Jerusalem for Transjordan."<sup>155</sup>

On May 17, Israeli forces attacked the Jaffa and Zion Gates to relieve the besieged Jewish Quarter. The attack on Jaffa Gate was repelled by Palestinian Arab defenders using old rifles and slinging homemade grenades attached to cords.<sup>156</sup> However, *Palmach* soldiers did succeed in breaching the Arab defense at the Zion Gate leading to the Jewish Quarter, after which they withdrew.<sup>157</sup> The defenders knew that if Israeli forces succeeded in establishing a bridgehead in the Jewish Quarter, they would use it as a springboard to capture the entire Old City. They implored King Abdullah to send the Arab Legion into the Old City.<sup>158</sup> On the same day the Jewish Quarter's Rabbi Weingarten, speaking on behalf of the besieged Jews, issued a message that they would surrender only to the Arab Legion.<sup>159</sup> The next day Glubb, following King Abdullah's instructions, ordered 300 men to advance into Jerusalem to link up with the Arab forces in the Old City.<sup>160</sup> The Arab Legion's presence in the Old City pre-empted an Israeli attack for the next few weeks. The *Haganah* still managed to inflict a high number of casualties by shelling the Arab quarters densely populated with refugees from West Jerusalem.<sup>161</sup>

It soon dawned upon Major al-Tal that his British superiors had sent him and his troops into Jerusalem on a mission that was mainly defensive in nature. In his memoirs, al-Tal wrote: "I thought that Jerusalem would certainly fall under my control, until I realized that I had been left alone with only 600 soldiers, and the artillery would remain with Lash [Brigadier Norman Lash, Glubb's second-in-command] and the other British officers."<sup>162</sup>

According to al-Tal, the forces under his command were sufficient to protect the Arab sections of East Jerusalem and to bomb the besieged Jewish Quarter, but

inadequate to attack the Israeli-held neighbourhoods outside the Old City's walls. Lash was unwilling to help him bomb important targets in West Jerusalem such as the Shneller military base, 'Bevingrad', Israeli official buildings in Rehavia, and the main power generator.<sup>163</sup>

The tension between Arab soldiers wanting to conquer West Jerusalem and the restraint ordered by their British superiors produced instances of insubordination. On May 21, Arab Legion Lieutenant Ghazi al-Harbi, defying an explicit order by Colonel Bill Newman, led an assault on the monastery of Notre Dame, located across from the New Gate adjacent to 'Bevingrad'.<sup>164</sup> The Legion troops, under cover of heavy artillery fire ordered by Lieutenant Muhammed Ma'aydeh—but sustaining heavy losses—succeeded in gaining a foothold on the monastery's ground floor. Glubb, however, ordered the artillery to cease fire and the Arab troops were forced to withdraw.<sup>165</sup> Al-Harbi implored Glubb to allow him to launch a second attack on Notre Dame. When Glubb refused, al-Harbi resigned in protest.<sup>166</sup> According to Benny Morris, the attack on Notre Dame was "apparently designed to relieve pressure, or expected pressure, on the Old City and Arab East Jerusalem in general, and [was] never pressed with determination. Conquest of West Jerusalem was never, and was never seen to be, on the cards."<sup>167</sup>

A result of the Arab Legion's attack on Notre Dame was that the United States held Britain accountable for the Legion's actions. The US government threatened to partially lift its Middle East arms embargo and allow shipments to Israel unless Britain cut off supplies to the Arab armies and helped the UN impose a truce.<sup>168</sup> Britain quickly assured the US that the Arab Legion would remain on the defensive in Jerusalem.<sup>169</sup>

On May 24, al-Tal disobeyed the orders of his British superiors by bombing Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. The American Consulate in Amman immediately intervened and pressured King Abdullah into ordering al-Tal to cease the shelling. Similar events occurred in Jerusalem's south. Egyptian troops arrived in Beit Safafa and Beit Jala and, in coordination with the Arab Legion, attacked and occupied the strategically located kibbutz Ramat Rahel. The commanding officer of the Arab Legion unit promptly received an order from Brigadier Lash to withdraw from the kibbutz. An argument ensued among the Legion officers at Ramat Rahel. Eventually the Legion soldiers withdrew, with the Egyptian troops compelled to follow suit.<sup>170</sup>

On May 27, al-Tal's troops, who had consistently shelled the Jewish Quarter, surrounded the defending Israeli troops in the Hurva Synagogue. The following day the Israelis surrendered to the Arab Legion, whose soldiers vigorously prevented any looting of the Jewish Quarter.<sup>171</sup> The Israeli men were held as prisoners of war and the women and children were set free to cross back into West Jerusalem. There

is no record of harm befalling any of the 1,500 Israeli soldiers or civilians who surrendered in the Jewish Quarter.<sup>172</sup>

With the Old City entirely under Arab control, al-Tal wished to launch an attack on West Jerusalem through Jaffa Gate.<sup>173</sup> The Israelis in West Jerusalem were again cut off from their coastal supply route, this time by Arab Legion positions on the foothills of the Jerusalem corridor, and were running low on ammunition. Their troops were utterly exhausted, and food and water were in dangerously short supply. From the heights of Sheikh Jarrah, the Mount of Olives and Nebi Samuel, the Arab Legion was firing heavy shells into West Jerusalem, and Israeli casualties were rapidly mounting. Despite the Legion's excellent opportunity to conquer West Jerusalem, Glubb rejected al-Tal's proposal and refused to deploy the tanks and troops needed to launch a full-scale attack on Jerusalem.<sup>174</sup>

Two dispatches from London on May 29 sealed any hope al-Tal still harbored of taking West Jerusalem. The first advised that all British officers in the Arab Legion—two-thirds of that army's high ranking soldiers—were to be removed from the fighting in Palestine. The second announced that Britain, the Arab Legion's primary supplier of weapons, was imposing an embargo on arms deliveries to the Middle East.<sup>175</sup>

On June 11, the Israelis, desperate to relieve their troops and civilians in Jerusalem, and the Arab countries, divided on whether to continue fighting but under pressure from Britain and the US, agreed to a thirty-day truce mediated by the UN. In open violation of the cease-fire terms, the *Haganah* transported hundreds of soldiers and tons of arms, including heavy artillery and ammunition to Jerusalem via the 'Burma Road.'<sup>176</sup> Conversely, the Arab forces, cut off from their main sources of arms due to the British embargo, were unable to adequately prepare themselves for the renewed fighting at the end of the cease-fire. De Azcarate's observation was that:

[...] taken as a whole, the first truce favored the Jews; not only in the particular case of Jerusalem, but also because [...] any truce, by its very nature, hinders the attacking forces in pursuing their objectives and makes it possible for the defenders to consolidate and improve their positions.<sup>177</sup>

On June 29, 1948, the *Haganah* became the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), into which the *Irgun* and the *Lehi* were theoretically incorporated. However, the *Irgun* and *Lehi* forces in Jerusalem—where they were largely concentrated—retained a large degree of operational autonomy.<sup>178</sup>

In East Jerusalem, the Transjordanians had taken both military and political

control. They effectively abolished the AHC and subordinated the National Committee to Abdullah al-Tal, who was appointed military governor. They also moved to establish a new pro-Hashemite cadre of administration and to disband the remaining Arab Liberation Army units.<sup>179</sup>

Palestinian Arabs in the Old City, including many who had been displaced from West Jerusalem, used the lull in the fighting to escape to safer areas. Their flight and the consequent desolation visited upon the Old City is described in the diaries of Greek Vice-Consul in Jerusalem, CX Mavrides:

What really characterized the Old City during the four weeks of the truce was the exodus of the non-combatant population who took refuge in the countryside, the surrounding villages and towns such as Ramallah, Jericho and Bethlehem, or Transjordan. From morning till evening the streets were full of porters and pack-animals, belonging to the Ta'amreh and A'bed tribes, who were carrying furniture, household utensils, mattresses, clothing, etc., from different parts of the city and heading to the Damascus Gate. The exodus was like an ongoing chain of animals, porters, women, aged people, children—all of them carrying something under the burning sun of July. As the end of the “truce” neared, this chain of people and animals was getting denser and denser every day.

On Friday, July 10, as the truce had expired (8:00 a.m.), the Old City was almost empty. Out of a population of 60,000 (plus the nearly 10,000 refugees who came from the new city suburbs), it is estimated that only about 5,000 to 7,000 only remain. Most of them are very poor, and thus did not have enough money to move away. Among those remaining in the city are the clerics of the different monasteries, patriarchates and the different religious establishments and the civilian government and consular and municipal employees obligated to remain at their posts. [...] And indeed, the old city's narrow streets, formerly teeming with people selling and buying, with visitors, villagers and passers-by, is now a city empty of people, a city with closed shops, and only once in a while one would meet a person or two in the street. Because of this situation, robberies are taking place in the streets and in full daylight and the robbed passers-by is unable to call anyone for help.<sup>180</sup>

During the truce, the Israeli forces not only consolidated their positions in and around Jerusalem, but apparently encircled and attacked the village of 'Ayn Karim

as well. There are many conflicting accounts of when exactly the village fell to the IDF. The following account was related by a former 'Ayn Karim resident who defended the village:

The villagers of 'Ayn Karim had between thirty and forty guns, none of which were in good condition. The National Council in Jerusalem sent us some faulty ammunition from World War II. I bought a rifle and ammunition with my own money for 25 dinars. We defended the village against the Zionist attack for nine days. I was on the front. We appealed to Egyptian Army soldiers stationed in Bethlehem to help us, but they told us that they could not unless they received explicit instructions from King Abdullah. The king eventually sent two [Arab Legion] tanks to help us. The Transjordanian soldiers told us to go and rest because we had been fighting for so long, and that they would defend the village. The next day the tanks disappeared and 'Ayn Karim was occupied by the Zionists. That was on the eleventh of July.<sup>181</sup>

According to this account, the IDF indeed captured 'Ayn Karim after the truce ended on July 9, but had waged several days of battle against the village during the truce.<sup>182</sup> The adjacent village of al-Malha fell on July 13-14 after prolonged battles with IDF and *Irgun* units.<sup>183</sup>

At the end of the cease-fire, IDF and Arab Legion cannons exchanged furious gunfire inside Jerusalem, and the Israeli troops launched a final abortive attack on the Old City. With the artillery brought in during the cease-fire, the IDF shelled the Old City intensely, inflicting extensive damage but this time causing a low casualty rate because so many had fled.<sup>184</sup> By then Palestinian Arabs viewed the Arab Legion with a large measure of skepticism, as related by the account of John Rose, one of the few remaining non-Jews in West Jerusalem:

The stalemate was intriguing and the intensity of fruitless daily bombing aroused suspicion. Rumors soon spread that perhaps after all there was a secret agreement between the sides and that the noise we heard was only a sideshow for the benefit of the population. The Arab Legion was accused of using ammunition filled with bran and sawdust intended to cause minimum damage to the enemy.<sup>185</sup>

## Israel's Expropriation and Settling of Arab Neighbourhoods in West Jerusalem

A new cease-fire, mediated by the UN, commenced in Jerusalem on July 17, 1948, and some days later Moshe Dayan replaced David Shaltiel as the IDF commander in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was now effectively divided into the Israeli-controlled West and the Transjordanian-controlled East. A belt of no-man's land ran south from Sheikh Jarrah, along the west side of the Old City's walls, and down Hebron Road to Ramat Rahel.

On June 27, UN Mediator Count Folke Bernadotte issued his suggestions for a settlement: a Palestinian union between two members, one Jewish and one Arab. The Arab members' territory would include Transjordan, the Western Galilee and Jerusalem. Palestinian refugees would be allowed to return to their homes without restriction and regain possession of their property. Israel rejected this plan as being even worse than internationalization, and the Arab states rejected it for consolidating too much control of territory in King Abdullah's hands and for recognizing Israel. The only person in favor was King Abdullah, but publicly he towed the Arab League line of resistance to the plan.<sup>186</sup>

In July, the campaign in Israel to annex West Jerusalem had already reached what an American journalist described as "an intense pitch."<sup>187</sup> He wrote that "extremists of the Irgun and the Stern Gang [...] collected thousands of signatures on annexation petitions. Their soldiers marched down Ben Yehuda Street, carrying banners that read "Jerusalem—No Foreign Rule." In Pied Piper fashion, hundreds of young men and women trailed behind them."<sup>188</sup> On August 2, the Israeli provisional government declared West Jerusalem "territory occupied by the State of Israel," whose laws were to be enforced throughout the city, and appointed Dov Joseph as military governor.<sup>189</sup> At this time Israeli leaders took no further official action towards the annexation of West Jerusalem due to their interest in Israel attaining UN membership.<sup>190</sup> Ben-Gurion, however, was still mulling over plans to conquer the whole of Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine. On September 26, he proposed to the provisional government a plan he recorded in his diary, according to which Israeli forces would invade

Bethlehem and Hebron, where there are about a hundred thousand Arabs. I assume that most of the Arabs of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron would flee, like the Arabs of Lydda, Jaffa, Tiberias, and Safad, and we will control the whole breadth of the country up to the Transjordan."<sup>191</sup>

In another diary entry he wrote about the same plan:

It is not impossible... that we will be able to conquer the way to the Negev, Eilat, and the Dead Sea and to secure the Negev for ourselves; also to broaden the corridor to Jerusalem from north and south; to liberate the rest of Jerusalem and to take the Old City; to seize all of central and western Galilee and to expand the borders of the state in all directions.<sup>192</sup>

While the state delayed officially annexing West Jerusalem, it employed its Absentee Property Regulations to confiscate all Arab homes, lands, and businesses, including any contents that had not already been looted.<sup>193</sup> These regulations, later codified as the Absentee Property Law of 1950, allowed all property belonging to an ‘absentee’ to be transferred to the Custodian of Absentee Property. An ‘absentee’ was defined as a person who, at any time between November 29, 1947 and the day on which the state of emergency declared in 1948 would cease to exist, became a national or citizen of an Arab country, visited an Arab country, or left his ordinary place of residence in Palestine “for a place outside Palestine before September 1, 1948.”<sup>194</sup> The status of the custodian, according to the law, is the same “as was that of the owner of the property,” enabling him to choose to maintain the property, sell it or lease it.<sup>195</sup>

Even before the first cease-fire in June, the Housing Committee began settling Jewish Israelis—mainly persons displaced due to the fighting—in Palestinian neighbourhoods such as Qatamon and the German Colony, but it was not until September that this policy was carried out systematically. New immigrants, the first category of Israelis to be settled, were housed in the German Colony, Qatamon, Baq'a, Musrara, Deir Abu Tor and Talbiya. Arnon Golan writes that the settling of new immigrants in Arab neighbourhoods in West Jerusalem was not so much a result of the lack of alternative housing, but rather a political strategy:

Populating the neighbourhoods also had an important political component in aiding the struggle against taking the city, or parts of it away from the State of Israel’s hands. Starting in September, the Israeli government undertook a policy of annexation in practice of the part of the city under its control, despite the fact that it had not yet officially annulled its recognition of the UN [partition] resolution. The population by Jews of former Arab neighbourhoods was supposed to create facts on the ground, after which it would be difficult to alter them in the framework of a political agreement. New immigrants, so very dependent, were the government’s and the Jewish Agency’s primary reserve for housing these neighbourhoods.<sup>196</sup>

There was also a rationale internal to Israeli politics according to which new immigrants were settled in West Jerusalem. The ruling party, *Mapai*, sought to strengthen its position, which was weak among Jerusalem's veteran population, through garnering support from new immigrants by accommodating them in the city. To encourage settlement in West Jerusalem where conditions were relatively difficult, the Israeli government provided incentives, like exemption from army service, for those who remained in the city.<sup>197</sup>

So zealously did the Jewish Agency settle new immigrants in Palestinians' houses that its officials clashed with those of the Custodian for Absentee Property. Not only did the Jewish Agency misreport to the Custodian of Absentee Property concerning the houses in which it was settling new immigrants, but it also took property, without authorization, from Palestinian Arabs' homes and handed it over to the Jewish Agency's New Immigrant Authority.<sup>198</sup> The new immigrants, for their part, were more than willing to move into the spacious Palestinian homes. So much so, that when some were told that they would be housed in the Jewish neighbourhood of Neve Sha'anani, they refused to move there, saying they preferred to live in the villas of Qatamon.<sup>199</sup>

As the new immigrants flooded into West Jerusalem, an acute housing crisis developed. On September 15, 1948, Military Governor Joseph reported that 5,000 Jews in West Jerusalem were in need of housing.<sup>200</sup> As Qatamon and the German Colony were already overcrowded, Jews began to be housed primarily in Baq'a and the Greek Colony. However, those lacking housing grew impatient, and many broke into and squatted in empty houses in Qatamon. Then again, some squatters had housing elsewhere but simply desired to improve their living conditions by moving into the more spacious Arab homes.<sup>201</sup> And some squatters, according to Golan, were Israeli soldiers:

Among the squatters there were even (Israeli) officers who exploited their positions and arbitrarily took apartments for themselves. On November 18 the head of the [Israeli army] City Commander's Welfare Unit appealed to the military governor after the housing shortage worsened to the extent that there were no longer houses to invade and the available houses in Baq'a were in his opinion unsuitable for tenants because their windows, doors and facilities had been plundered or destroyed.<sup>202</sup>

Some soldiers had two apartments: one in the city center and one in Arab neighbourhoods which they rented out for a considerable price. By early 1950 the Israeli housing authorities authorized almost all the squatters, soldiers and civilians,

to remain in the Palestinian homes they had broken into.<sup>203</sup>

Looting was still a problem in Jerusalem, as related by Dov Joseph in a letter to Ben-Gurion:

The looting is spreading once again ... I cannot verify all the reports which reach me, but I get the distinct impression that the commanders are not over-eager to catch and punish the thieves ... I receive complaints every day. By way of example, I enclose a copy of a letter I received from the manager of the Notre Dame de France. Behavior like this in a monastery can cause quite serious harm to us. I've done my best to put a stop to the thefts there, which are all done by soldiers, since civilians are not permitted to enter the place. But as you can see from this letter, these acts are continuing. I am powerless.<sup>204</sup>

As previously mentioned, the Palestinian Arabs remaining in the West Jerusalem suburbs were confined to Baq'a. In mid-September, the Israeli military further concentrated them into a half-square mile area surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. During daylight hours they were permitted to roam around the compound, and at night were under curfew. Israeli marauders broke through the fence to steal what they could from the non-Jews. In addition, gangs of Israeli soldiers burst into the houses on the pretext that they were looking for "hidden arms and Arabs," and proceeded to extort money, jewelry, and other valuables.<sup>205</sup> Some Jews, due to the housing shortage, defied the military authorities' separation policy and rented rooms from non-Jews in the concentration zone.

The formal cessation of hostilities between Israel and the Arab States at the end of November 1948 allowed the expansion of Jewish settlement in Jerusalem into the Arab neighbourhoods that until then had been military zones. Musrara was one such neighbourhood, and Hanah Levy, who had recently emigrated from Morocco, described the danger she faced after settling in a house next to the demarcation line:

Outside my house was a sign: "Warning! Border Ahead." If I took a wrong step, I would be shot by an Arab sniper. Stones were thrown and bullets fired through my window from the other side [East Jerusalem]. Because it was such a dangerous place to live, the authorities never required me to pay rent or to buy the house.<sup>206</sup>

Levy said that Jewish immigrants, practically all of them from North Africa, were settled in the frontier neighbourhood of Musrara "so that the [Palestinian] Arabs would know that there are Jews living here and would be scared to infiltrate into the neighbourhood."<sup>207</sup>

By the end of May 1949, all of West Jerusalem's Arab districts had been settled, at least to some extent, by Jews, most of them new immigrants.<sup>208</sup> During the summer of 1949, several hundred new immigrants from Eastern Europe were settled in Deir Yasin, despite a protest to Ben-Gurion by some of the Yishuv's leading intellectuals, including Martin Buber and Akiva Ernst Simon. They wrote, "Resettling Deir Yasin within a year of the crime, and with the framework of ordinary settlement, would amount to an endorsement of, or at least an acquiescence with, the massacre."<sup>209</sup> Ben-Gurion never responded to their repeated protests and Givat Shaul Bet was established at the site of the village.<sup>210</sup> Henry Cattán estimates that, in all, Israel occupied some ten thousand Arab homes, mostly fully furnished, in West Jerusalem.<sup>211</sup>

## UN Resolution 194

Count Bernadotte, the UN Mediator for Palestine, was assassinated by the *Lehi* on September 16, 1948. For months he had been shuttling between the Arab states and Israel trying to arrange, among other issues, the repatriation of Palestinian Arab refugees. Bernadotte was skeptical about the viability and justice of the UN Partition Plan as a solution to the Arab-Jewish conflict. He recommended to the UN General Assembly that "the right of the Arab refugees to return to their homes in Jewish-controlled territory at the earliest possible date should be affirmed by the United Nations."<sup>212</sup> Regarding Jerusalem, he forwarded multiple suggestions before settling upon the idea of a *corpus separatum*.

The movements of refugees from West Jerusalem after what Palestinians call *al-Nakba* [the catastrophe] are difficult to trace. This is because a large number had the means to relocate elsewhere, often abroad, and did not move *en masse* to resettle in the West Bank, Gaza, or the nearby Arab countries, as happened in the case of refugees from many villages. Still, in late 1948, there were 7,500 Palestinian Arab refugees from Jerusalem, including the West Jerusalem neighbourhoods of Qatamon, Upper and Lower Baq'a, and Musrara living in East Jerusalem.<sup>213</sup> These refugees either lived in the open or were housed in mosques, convents, schools, and Old City houses in ruinous conditions. They were restricted to meager food rations and suffered from malnutrition. Nonetheless, their living conditions were better than those of refugees in Gaza and the West Bank, partly due to the presence of many Christian relief organizations in Jerusalem.<sup>214</sup> It is also recorded that a group of "Christian refugees went to Salt, Madaba and Amman, and were joined by a group of Armenian Jerusalemites."<sup>215</sup>

Ex-British Mandate employee Stuart Perowne, who carried out relief work with Palestinian refugees in the Jerusalem area, categorized them as: official refugees,

economic refugees, and dwellers in frontier villages.<sup>216</sup> Many ‘official refugees’ were to be later sheltered in the camps of the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) upon its establishment in 1950. UNRWA’s criteria for defining people as refugees were those who had lost their homes, their means of livelihood, or were in need. All Palestinians displaced from West Jerusalem and its surrounding villages were, and are, such refugees.

Economic refugees, according to Perowne, were those who suffered economic loss. They were of two types. The first included, in the case of West Jerusalem, those who owned property but resided elsewhere; those who worked for the Mandate in the city; and those who had set up small shops and trades, or were employed by the wealthy as servants, chauffeurs and gardeners. Many such economic refugees had to start again from scratch. The second type of economic refugees were people in the Jerusalem area dependent upon the economic activity of those who earned their income in West Jerusalem. The fall of West Jerusalem led to a sharp decline in their standard of living and particularly, writes Perowne, their standard of education.

Dwellers in frontier villages were impacted not just due to the danger of living on the demarcation line, but also because many of them were cut off from their lands and, as happened with Beit Safafa, their fellow villagers and relatives. Perowne concluded that “in Jerusalem itself, the problem is concentrated, for in Jerusalem you have both official refugees and economic refugees, and a truce line that goes right through the city.”<sup>217</sup>

On December 11, 1948, the UN General Assembly accepted Count Bernadotte’s recommendations regarding the refugees and Jerusalem and, in Paragraph 11 of Resolution 194 (III), stated that:

[...] the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible.

The same resolution reiterates UN Resolution 181 that Jerusalem be a *corpus separatum* and calls for the city’s demilitarization:

The General Assembly [...] 8. *Resolves* that, in view of its association with three world religions, the Jerusalem area, including the present municipality of Jerusalem

*plus* the surrounding villages and towns, the most eastern of which shall be Abu Dis; the most southern, Bethlehem; the most western, Ein Kerem (including also the built-up area of Motsa); and the most northern Shu'fat, should be accorded special and separate treatment from the rest of Palestine and should be placed under effective United Nations control;

*Requests* the Security Council to take further steps to ensure the demilitarization of Jerusalem at the earliest possible date;

*Instructs* the [UN Conciliation] Commission to present to the fourth regular session of the General Assembly detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area which will provide for the maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups consistent with the special international status of the Jerusalem area; [...] 9. *Resolves* that, pending agreement on more detailed arrangements among the Governments and authorities concerned, the freest possible access to Jerusalem by road, rail or air should be accorded to all inhabitants of Palestine.

Four days after the UN resolution, Jerusalem Military Governor Dov Joseph reported to the Governor's Council that to counter the UN refusal to include Jerusalem in the State of Israel's borders, he had ordered the immediate expansion of Jewish housing areas into territories abandoned by Arabs which until then had not been populated by Jews. The first such area to be settled was the vicinity of the mercantile center in Mamillah.<sup>218</sup>

In February 1949, with the culmination of the military government's activities, Israel annexed the whole of West Jerusalem. Israel's defiance of UN Resolution 194 marked the first time that the state would challenge a UN resolution.

### **Armistice: Israel and Jordan's Division of Jerusalem**

On February 2, 1949, the Israeli government declared that it no longer considered West Jerusalem occupied territory and abolished military rule there. Negotiations over Jerusalem—and the rest of the territory bordering the Israeli-Transjordanian front lines—began the same month. Abdullah al-Tal represented the Transjordanians and Moshe Dayan the Israelis. The division of Jerusalem between Transjordan and Israel, without Palestinian Arabs having a say in the matter, was a foregone conclusion.<sup>219</sup>

Given the pragmatism displayed by the two sides, it did not take long for them to arrange a *modus vivendi* over Jerusalem. Avi Shlaim, in *Collusion Across the Jordan*, offers an analysis of the motivations behind the Israeli-Transjordanian

understanding.<sup>220</sup> Militarily, Jerusalem provided strategic depth and height for both countries. In addition, both Zionist leaders and King Abdullah saw that the religious and historical weight attached to the city would help to provide legitimacy for their regimes. Then there were the Mufti, the Arab Higher Committee, and Palestinian nationalism in general, seen as the enemies of both Zionist and Hashemite aspirations in Palestine. For King Abdullah, suppression of the agents of Palestinian nationalism would be most efficient if he were to control their operational base, East Jerusalem. Israel, for its part, was willing to cede East Jerusalem if it meant gaining a partner to squash Palestinian Arab hopes for a state and to neutralize their activities across the line in Jerusalem. In any case, Israeli leaders knew to be patient regarding Jerusalem, for if they were to proceed with the conquest of the whole city, they risked an outcry by the international community calling for the city's internationalization. "Partition," Shlaim concludes, "was preferable to internationalization."<sup>221</sup> Dov Yosef, speaking in favor of the division of Jerusalem, said:

I find it difficult to understand the political logic that holds that instead of the Arabs having something, it is preferable that both they and we have nothing. We will pluck out one of our eyes so that we can pluck out both of theirs.<sup>222</sup>

So opposed to internationalization was Israel and so confident of its strong position in relation to its neighbors, that in mid-1949 Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett announced that Israel would not accept internationalization even for the sake of a peace treaty with the Arab states.<sup>223</sup>

Transjordan and Israel signed an armistice agreement on April 3, 1949, which stipulated that their mutual borders were neither political nor territorial and that there was no commitment "as regards the ultimate settlement of the Palestine question."<sup>224</sup> The two sides continued talking towards an overall peace treaty, but were unable to bridge their disagreements, particularly concerning Jerusalem. The initial Jordanian demand for a return of all Palestinian Arabs to their homes in West Jerusalem's southern neighbourhoods was promptly rejected by Israel.<sup>225</sup>

Talks between Jordan and Israel broke down in May and resumed in January 1950. Israel's bottom line was control over the Old City's Jewish Quarter and secure access to Mount Scopus. For their part, the Jordanian negotiators were in general willing to accept monetary compensation for the Arab quarters of West Jerusalem. However, Khulusi Khayri, a Palestinian Arab minister in Jordan's government who participated in the talks, demanded, much to King Abdullah's chagrin, the return of all Arab quarters of Jerusalem.

Khayri was subsequently dropped from the negotiating team.<sup>226</sup> Israel then entered into direct negotiations with the king, and the two sides quickly drew up a draft peace agreement. The draft, without explicitly referring to refugees, agreed that compensation would be paid to property owners in Jerusalem whose property remained under the control of the other party: that is, Arabs from West Jerusalem and Jews from East Jerusalem.<sup>227</sup> However, the agreement was never signed because of Jordanian unwillingness to cede territory in the Old City and pressure from Arab states against a unilateral treaty with Israel.<sup>228</sup>

Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees from West Jerusalem waited expectantly, but in vain, on the eastern side of the demarcation line for a favorable outcome to the negotiations. At the time, Mavrides wrote:

After the cessation of hostilities, the inhabitants of the suburbs of Baq'a, Qatamon, Talbiya and the Greek and German Colonies who took refuge in the Old City in anguish, are awaiting the opening of the New Gate and the Jaffa Gate—the unification of the two sectors of the divided city—to go and visit and recover their abandoned homes.<sup>229</sup>

Writing later from East Jerusalem, Stuart Perowne described the path of the demarcation line:

Starting from the north, it comes in obliquely from the west, until it reaches the western spur of Mount Scopus, to the west of the main road. It then runs down in a southerly direction, skirting the American Colony and St. George's, which remain in Jordan by a matter of yards, and so down to the Damascus Gate, which is again just within Jordan. Here the line turns southwest, and runs up the hill, along the old wall of the city, and so down nearly to the Jaffa Gate. Thence it runs again along the Old City wall, to the southwest corner of it. Here it turns east, but only to just below the Zion Gate; then south again, down to the former Government House, and thence it gradually eases off to the west.<sup>230</sup>

On the eastern spur of Mount Scopus there was a demilitarized zone, which comprised the Hebrew University, the Hadassah Hospital, and the British War Cemetery.

Throughout the negotiations, the Israelization of West Jerusalem proceeded. To lessen the scope of potential Israeli compromises in the event of a peace agreement, Moshe Dayan ordered that the frontier neighbourhood of Deir Abu Tor be settled,

together with Talpiyot and Ramat Rachel. Dayan's directive was designed to preempt pressure on Israel from the UN-chaired armistice commission to relinquish control over the southern Jerusalem-Bethlehem road.<sup>231</sup> As happened in other Arab neighbourhoods that were opened up to settlement, buildings and homes in the Deir Abu Tor area were looted.<sup>232</sup>

In May 1949, Israel took over, in accordance with the armistice agreements, the northern half of Beit Safafa, a village in south Jerusalem which had been under Jordanian control. Beit Safafa villagers were not consulted about the arrangement to partition their village and were understandably enraged. For one year villagers could move between the two halves, but then a fence was erected and families were split and people cut off from their land. For example, Ahmad Salman lost one hundred dunams of land in West Jerusalem while he remained on the Jordanian side of the village.<sup>233</sup>

It was not until November 1949 that Israel lifted the movement restrictions imposed on those Palestinians confined to the Baq'a zone.<sup>234</sup> They were issued Israeli identity cards and, together with the Beit Safafa villagers inside Israeli-controlled territory, constituted the small Palestinian Arab minority of West Jerusalem. The Custodian of Absentee Property confiscated the homes of many Arabs in the Baq'a zone, and they were forced to pay rent to the Israeli state. John Rose recorded the confiscation of his aunt's property in Baq'a:

This [Absentee Property] law finally caught up with Aunt Arousiag and she was informed by the Custodian of Enemy Property that she had no rights to the house. She was to be treated as a tenant, and a demand for rent was sent to her for the two rooms which she occupied; furthermore, rents collected by her were to be handed over to the Custodian. The owner had been her late brother, Hagop, and her two nephews and two nieces were recognized as joint heirs to the property. Two of them were considered absentees, the other two not. This news caused much worry to us, and we sympathized with Aunt Arousiag who in vain kept on explaining that the house was really hers. She had lived there since it was built by her brother at the turn of the century, and had ploughed most of her earnings into the building. Unfortunately her pleas fell on deaf ears.<sup>235</sup>

## **The Israeli Transfer of Government to West Jerusalem**

By the end of 1948, Israel had not formally annexed West Jerusalem so as not to jeopardize its pending application for UN membership. After its first application for admission was rejected by the UN Security Council on December 17, 1948,

Israel's UN representative repeatedly reassured the General Assembly that his government intended to comply with the resolutions pertaining to Jerusalem.<sup>236</sup>

The UN was skeptical, however, of the Israeli government's good faith concerning Jerusalem when, in early 1949, it began transferring its offices to the city from Tel Aviv. The transfer of government offices enjoyed top priority on Prime Minister Ben Gurion's agenda as an important step towards the official declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and a preventive measure against the implementation of the UN resolutions to internationalize the city. Still, Israel's UN representative Abba Eban tried to make the UN think otherwise.

Following Israel's new application for membership on February 24, 1949, Eban testified before the UN's Ad Hoc Political Committee. His remarks before the committee—at best misleading and at worst duplicitous—are traced in Henry Cattán's book, *Jerusalem*. When queried about Israel's intentions in the transfer of government offices, Eban said that:

... the re-establishment of institutions of health and learning, and of at least a proportion of the official business which had once been the main support of Jerusalem, had been indispensable to prevent the city from becoming impoverished and depressed. That was the sole motive for transferring to Jerusalem the personnel of non-political departments whose presence might stem the flight from Jerusalem and preserve the city's traditional primacy in the religious, educational and medical life of the country. No juridical facts whatever were created by such steps, which were dictated not by a desire to create new political facts, but to assist Jerusalem and to add economic recovery to the other aspects of its splendid recuperation.<sup>237</sup>

Eban also reassured the committee that Israel would not invoke Article 2, paragraph 7, of the charter—which proscribes the UN from intervening in matters within the “domestic jurisdiction of states”—to avoid complying with the UN resolutions concerning refugees and Jerusalem:

The government of Israel will co-operate with the Assembly in seeking a solution to those problems ... I do not think that Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, which relates to domestic jurisdiction, could possibly affect the Jerusalem problem, since *the legal status of Jerusalem is different from that of the territory in which Israel is sovereign*. My own feeling is that it would be a mistake for any of

the Governments concerned to take refuge, with regard to the refugee problem, in their legal rights to exclude people from their territories.<sup>238</sup>

Eban added that, upon Israel's admission to the UN, "the General Assembly would then be able to make recommendations directly to the Government of Israel [about Jerusalem], which would, I think, attribute to those resolutions extremely wide validity."<sup>239</sup> Eban must have felt confident that the UN would not subject his statements to rigorous scrutiny, for he even claimed that the holding of the first Israeli *Knesset*, or parliament, in Jerusalem on February 14, 1949, was based solely on "an historical motive which had nothing whatever to do with the future status of Jerusalem."<sup>240</sup>

For his part, Ben-Gurion had never tried to veil his plans to hold onto Jerusalem. According to his four-year plan of state development, Jerusalem would be the center of Israeli life, and various governmental, national, and cultural institutions would be shifted to the city. Also, new industries would be created there, and settlements would be erected in a defensive belt.<sup>241</sup>

Despite Israel's moves in Jerusalem, the UN saw fit to admit it as a new member on May 11, 1949, with the General Assembly placing on the record Israel's "declarations and explanations" regarding the implementation of Resolutions 181 and 194.<sup>242</sup>

The Israeli government, meanwhile, steadily proceeded with its transfer of offices to Jerusalem. A major aspect of the transfer was the relocation of thousands of government clerks, who received preferential treatment in the allocation of housing. On April 12, 1949, a high-level government meeting was held in the Israeli Defense Ministry to discuss the housing of government clerks in Jerusalem. It was decided that four hundred apartment units be allocated to the clerks and that they be given priority in choosing apartments in the neighbourhoods of Baq'a, the German Colony and the Greek Colony. Shaul Avigur, one of Ben-Gurion's closest advisors, was to be the absolute arbitrator in any dispute. As part of settling and resettling new immigrants in alternative sites, the Absorption Department was granted authority over Musrara and Lower Lifta.<sup>243</sup> Following this decision, new immigrants were only allocated housing in neighbourhoods reserved for government clerks in those apartments that were in such bad shape that the cost of renovation was too high.<sup>244</sup> Houses in the elegant neighbourhood of Talbiya were reserved exclusively for senior officials and those with important connections, such as judges and professors at the Hebrew University.<sup>245</sup>

Out of political considerations, though, government clerks were sometimes placed in less desirable neighbourhoods. The Ministry of Provisioning and

Rationing's clerks were housed in Deir Abu Tor, adjacent to the demarcation line. These houses were in terrible condition due to the intense fighting that had been waged in the neighbourhood, and there remained a danger of sniper fire. Still, a decision was taken to house the clerks in Deir Abu Tor because of Israel's goal to settle Jews throughout the full area of Jerusalem under its control. Many of these clerks requested to be relocated in Qatamon where the expansive houses were in better condition. In the end, senior-ranking officials succeeded in being housed in Qatamon, while regular clerks were left in Deir Abu Tor.<sup>246</sup>

To provide for the ever-increasing number of Jewish residents in Jerusalem, the Israeli government opened many new schools and health service facilities; most were located in buildings belonging to Palestinians. The *Histadrut* opened dozens of schools in Musrara, Baq'a, the German Colony and 'Ayn Karim.<sup>247</sup> To stimulate Jewish Jerusalem's economy, new small industries and businesses were given special loans to lure them to the city.<sup>248</sup> The Custodian of Absentee Property handed over many buildings to be renovated for workshops, mostly in Mamillah, while additional ones were set up in the German Colony and the Greek Colony.<sup>249</sup>

## Jerusalem as Israel's Capital

In the fall of 1949, an international lobby group of Catholic (particularly Latin American), Communist and Muslim countries pushed for a new vote on internationalization in the UN General Assembly.<sup>250</sup> The vote was scheduled for December 9. By that time, though, the Israeli government was well on its way to making West Jerusalem the state's political hub. As recorded by *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent Kenneth Bilby: "By October 30, 1949, as the UN [General] Assembly prepared to debate a new internationalization scheme, the movement of the government was in full swing [...] Every ministry established a nucleus in Jerusalem. About a thousand governmental employees had moved there. Israel was preparing to present the UN with a *fait accompli*."<sup>251</sup> The previous month, in response to a suggestion by the UN Palestine Conciliation Commission to proceed with the city's internationalization, Foreign Minister Sharett had proclaimed, that "Jerusalem is an inseparable part of Israel—politically, militarily, administratively, economically, socially, and culturally."<sup>252</sup> Four days before the UN vote Ben-Gurion reasserted that "Jewish Jerusalem is an organic and inseparable part of the State of Israel."<sup>253</sup>

The General Assembly, in issuing Resolution 303 (IV), reiterated the prior resolutions concerning Jerusalem, namely that an international regime establish a *corpus separatum* in the city. The resolution provoked serious concern among the Israeli government, and it even considered the possibility that the UN would create

an international army and take Jerusalem by force. To this, Ben-Gurion said, "Obviously, if it comes to a confrontation with a military force sent by the UN, we shall give in."<sup>254</sup> Still, the government reckoned an invasion by UN-deployed troops unlikely, and feared economic sanctions as a more realistic outcome of the resolution.<sup>255</sup>

Overcoming his government's trepidation, Ben-Gurion again forged ahead with his plans to make Jerusalem indisputable Israeli territory. The Israeli Prime Minister perceived the latest UN resolution as a litmus test for Israeli resolve in the city. He not only believed that internationalization would be a threat to Israel's independence, but feared that it would encourage calls emanating from the UN to repatriate Palestinian Arab refugees.<sup>256</sup> As he wrote in his diary: "If we cause the failure of the UN resolution here, the issue of the borders will be no more and we will not be required to accept refugees. Our success on the question of Jerusalem resolves all international problems surrounding Israel."<sup>257</sup>

Ben-Gurion announced that "Jerusalem is an integral part of the State of Israel and its eternal capital. No United Nations vote will ever change this fact."<sup>258</sup> Following the Prime Minister's lead, the *Knesset* voted on December 13, 1949 to officially declare Jerusalem Israel's capital and accelerated the transfer of government offices to the city.

Ben-Gurion's defiance of UN Resolution 303 was not merely a stubborn act of bravado, but a calculation based both on the understandings arrived at with King Abdullah and on recent actions by the United States and Britain. Both of those countries had voted with Israel against UN Resolution 303. Since the summer, the US State Department's policy regarding Jerusalem was that a *corpus separatum* was "unrealistic as it could not be implemented by the United Nations against the wishes of Israel and Jordan without the use of substantial forces."<sup>259</sup> Washington now backed a Conciliation Commission plan for limited internationalization that would accept Israel's control of West Jerusalem and Jordan's control of East Jerusalem.<sup>260</sup> Britain had recognized Israel, now considered it a friendly country, and was backing the Jordanian-Israeli understandings regarding Jerusalem and Palestine in general. The United States and Britain, along with the Soviet Union, abstained from the subsequent December 20 vote by the UN Trusteeship Council calling for the removal of Israeli government offices from Jerusalem.<sup>261</sup>

To the Israeli government it was clear that it could proceed with its plans to settle Jerusalem and establish the city as the capital of Israel for, without the backing of the major UN powers, the organization's resolutions would not be enforced.

## Conclusion

This study has offered a perspective on the fall of Arab West Jerusalem different from the conventional Zionist version mentioned in the introduction. While tracing the Zionist conquest, it has endeavored to center events around the local Palestinian Arab population and their neighbourhoods.

To sum up, it can be said that initial acts of hostility by Palestinian Arabs in Jerusalem in late 1947 were intended more to disrupt implementation of the partition plan than to enter into a war with the Zionists. Palestinian Arabs, including the wealthy ones, only fled West Jerusalem after an intensive campaign by the Zionist forces to drive them out. There is no record of Arab leaders calling on Palestinian Arabs in West Jerusalem to flee; only entreaties and orders to stay put.

Jerusalem was the site of some of the most bitter fighting in 1948, which resulted in thousands of Jewish and Arab casualties. As elsewhere in Palestine, Zionist forces were better prepared than those of the Palestinian Arabs. The Zionist soldiers far outnumbered those of the Arabs, even after May when the neighboring Arab countries entered the war. Early on, unable to conquer the well-fortified Jewish settlements, the Palestinian Arab irregulars attempted to sever supply lines to Jewish Jerusalem. A sweeping Zionist offensive then cleared practically all the Palestinian Arabs out of the Jerusalem corridor, and subsequently out of West Jerusalem. It was during this offensive that *Irgun* and *Lehi* fighters perpetrated the Deir Yasin massacre, for which the *Haganah*'s role must also be called into question. The massacre precipitated the flight of many more Arab civilians and, with the fall of Qatamon, few remained in West Jerusalem.

Colluding with the departing British military, the Zionist forces were able to quickly occupy and consolidate the British positions in West Jerusalem on May 14, 1948, the date Ben-Gurion declared Israel's independence. While Jewish Agency leaders had previously muted their hopes of including all of Jerusalem in a Jewish state, with the war's outbreak they made an intensive effort to conquer the rest of the city. Fierce defense by Palestinian Arab irregulars and the Arab Legion's entrance into the Old City thwarted their plans, but the Legion did not challenge Israeli control over West Jerusalem. In fact, King Abdullah had concluded a secret agreement with the Zionist leadership to divide Palestine between them along the lines of the partition plan. Jerusalem was the only missing link in their understandings, which led to the king reluctantly committing his troops there. Despite the fact that the Arab Legion's chances of a successful invasion of West Jerusalem were good, King Abdullah—and the United States and Britain—had no intention of allowing such an eventuality. A truce, imposed after heavy American and British pressure, resulted in the Israeli forces transporting more troops and massive amounts of weapons into Jerusalem.

The Zionist authorities were quick to populate each of the evacuated Arab neighbourhoods in West Jerusalem with Jews, not with the intention of providing temporary shelter, but to permanently Israelize all occupied territory. The Israeli government, encouraged by the UN's ineffectuality in enforcing its resolutions, drove home its position on Jerusalem by declaring the city the eternal capital of the State of Israel.

Only a few hundred non-Jews remained in West Jerusalem: those in the divided village of Beit Safafa and those who had been concentrated in Baq'a. The rest were refugees. In the Jerusalem sub-district under Israeli control, Zionist forces had demolished 37 of 41 Arab villages.<sup>262</sup> They had driven over 60,000 Palestinian Arabs from West Jerusalem and its immediate environs.<sup>263</sup>

Scholars and activists have waged endless debates on whether the dimensions of the Palestinian refugee problem are attributable to a conscious Zionist plan. While scholars have proven the existence of such plans, perhaps the best evidence of Zionist intentions is Israel's refusal to allow the return of refugees. To this day, not one Palestinian Arab refugee has returned to his or her home in West Jerusalem.

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### Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Banks, *Torn Country*, p. 24. Banks' description of pre-1948 Jerusalem is as follows: "Then as now, Jerusalem was divided into the Old City to the east and the new, western sector, which also extended to the south, known as Jewish Jerusalem."

<sup>2</sup> Dumper, *The Politics of Jerusalem since 1967*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> The German Colony, originally settled by the German Templers sect in the nineteenth century, retained the name even after it became a predominantly Arab neighbourhood.

<sup>4</sup> The Greek Colony is so called because the nucleus of the quarter was built by Greeks. The name remained even after it became a largely Arab neighbourhood.

<sup>5</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 196.

<sup>6</sup> Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cmd. 5479, Chapter XII, Paragraphs 10 and 12, cited in

Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Simons, *International Proposals*, p. 83.

<sup>8</sup> Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> Hadawi, *Loss of a Heritage*, p. 141. According to Palestinian geographer Khalil Tufakji, quoted in the *Jerusalem Post* of June 2, 1995, the 15.21 percent of land owned by 'other residents' was Christian church land.

<sup>10</sup> Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> Golani, *Zionism Without Zion*, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 60.

<sup>14</sup> Francis Ofner, *December 1947: From the Notes of a Journalist*, *Jerusalem Post*, December 14th, 1990.

<sup>15</sup> Khalidi, *The Arab Perspective*, p. 121.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 617.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 217.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* p. 239.

<sup>20</sup> Shlaim, *The Debate about 1948*, p. 299.

<sup>21</sup> Khalidi, *The Arab Perspective*, p. 118.

<sup>22</sup> Al-'Arif, *Nakbat Filastin*, pp. 17 and 39, 48.

<sup>23</sup> Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, p. 190.

<sup>24</sup> Lorch, *The Edge of the Sword*, p. 43.

<sup>25</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 239.

<sup>26</sup> Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, p. 194.

<sup>27</sup> Shlaim, *The Debate about 1948*, p. 293.

<sup>28</sup> Pappe, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 7; Shlaim, *The Debate about 1948*, p. 293.

<sup>29</sup> Neff, *Fallen Pillars*, p. 50, UN Resolution 181 [II] barely attained the requisite two-thirds majority with a vote of 33 members in favor and 13 against.

<sup>30</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p.56; Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.

<sup>31</sup> Cunningham Papers, box 2, file 3. Middle East Center, St. Anthony's College (Oxford), cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 35.

<sup>32</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 33. Although Morris implies that these operations were unauthorized, he provides no evidence to support this claim.

<sup>33</sup> Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, p. 95; al-'Arif, *Nakbat Filastin*, p. 77.

<sup>34</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri. He had served with the Arab Legion from 1939 to 1946.

<sup>35</sup> For figures on Arab and Zionist troop strength, see Appendices VIII, IX-A, and IX-B of Khalidi, Walid, *From Haven to Conquest*, pp. 858-71.

<sup>36</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Interview, Ali Hassan Elyan.

<sup>39</sup> Al 'Arif, *Nakbat Filastin*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>40</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 16.

<sup>41</sup> Mattar, *Mufti of Jerusalem*, p. 127.

<sup>42</sup> Ben Gurion's War Diary, p 169, entry for 21 January, 1948, cited in Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> Interview, AR.

<sup>44</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.

<sup>45</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 62.

<sup>46</sup> Khalidi, Walid, *From Haven to Conquest*, pp. 858-71.

<sup>47</sup> Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, p. 196; Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 217. The estimates are based on Walid Khalidi's calculations cited by Flapan, which include both fully mobilized and second-line troops in the settlements, *Gadna* youth battalions, home guard and *Irgun* and *Lehi* fighters. Shlaim writes that Ben-Gurion concentrated one-third of the Israeli forces in and around Jerusalem because he considered the city to be so vital in the war with the Arab armies.

<sup>48</sup> Interview, Hagit Shlonsky.

<sup>49</sup> Interview, Tikva Honig-Parnass.

<sup>50</sup> Golani, *Zionism Without Zion*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>51</sup> Cunningham Papers, box 2, file 3. Middle East Center, St. Anthony's College (Oxford), cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 36.

<sup>52</sup> Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, p. 95.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Arif, *Nakbat Filistin*, pp. 72, 133.

<sup>54</sup> Of those interviewed for this study, two ex-fighters during the conflict in Jerusalem—one Jew and one Arab—are both convinced of British partiality towards the Zionist troops. The Arab, a former officer of the British Mandate's Palestine Police in Jerusalem, cited the Jewish Settlement Police (JSP) as an example of institutionalized favoritism. (Interview, AR) He noted that, as a matter of policy, the British trained Jewish police officers to form the JSP, whose role was to guard the settlements, and that these officers closely coordinated their actions with the British police. No such aid was provided to Palestinian Arabs to help them defend their villages and neighbourhoods. Former *Haganah* soldier Tikva Honig-Parnass narrated a couple of personal experiences that to her symbolize the British army's partiality to the *Haganah*:

“Early on in the fighting in Jerusalem, I was part of a reserve unit that was sent on various assignments. During one assignment I went with a group of other girls to Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. Our assignment was to retrieve weapons from an arms cache in the natural science laboratory. We were given a few dissembled Sten [machine] guns, part of which we put in our shirts. We got on a bus. I was the last one to board and I paid the driver. When I went to sit down, three British soldiers on the bus were laughing at me. And then the whole bus was laughing. I didn't know why, until I realized that part of a Sten was protruding from the side of my shirt. The British soldiers did not do anything to me. If I had been an Arab, they would surely have arrested me.

“Another time I went to Shimon HaTzadik (a Jewish neighbourhood in East Jerusalem) to pick up a part of a Sten gun and had to walk past a British checkpoint. I was scared to death. I told the soldiers that I was a nurse from Hadassah Hospital and wanted them to accompany me to a Jewish neighbourhood. They laughed at me and said ‘we know who you are,’ then sent me on my way.”

<sup>55</sup> Khalidi, *The Arab Perspective*, p. 131.

- <sup>56</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 11.
- <sup>57</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 112.
- <sup>58</sup> Khalidi, *All That Remains*, pp. 301-302.
- <sup>59</sup> Sheikh Badr was the village located closest to the city, adjacent to Romeima, of which not a house remains and where the *Knesset*, the Israeli parliament building, now stands.
- <sup>60</sup> Galili Papers, "Protocol of the Meeting on Arab Affairs, 1-2 January 1948," pp. 12-23, cited in Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 50.
- <sup>61</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 98.
- <sup>62</sup> Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem S25/4013, cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 98.
- <sup>63</sup> Central Zionist Archives S25-4013, "Summary of Information about Hotel Semiramis...in Qatamon," the Arab division of the Jewish Agency Political Department, 8 January 1948, cited in Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 50.
- <sup>64</sup> Sakakini, *Jerusalem and I*, p. 111.
- <sup>65</sup> Karmi, *The 1948 Exodus*, p. 35.
- <sup>66</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 98.
- <sup>67</sup> Interview, Y. Kalouti.
- <sup>68</sup> Ben-Gurion, War Diaries, 15/1/48, p. 156, cited in Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, p. 92.
- <sup>69</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 23.
- <sup>70</sup> Central Zionist Archives, January 1948 *SHY* reports, cited in Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 15. *SHY* is an acronym for *Sherut Yedirot*, the *Haganah*'s intelligence service.
- <sup>71</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 15.
- <sup>72</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 17.
- <sup>73</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 52.
- <sup>74</sup> Ben-Gurion, War Diary, Vol. 1, entry dated 7 February, 1948, cited in Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, p. 180.
- <sup>75</sup> Gabbay, *A Political Study of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 66.
- <sup>76</sup> De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 22.
- <sup>77</sup> Al-'Arif *Nakbat Filastin*, p. 117.
- <sup>78</sup> Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, p. 43. According to Flapan, the siege of Jerusalem prompted Eliyahu Sasson, the Jewish Agency expert on Arab affairs, and Chaim Berman, secretary of the political department, to forward a plan of compromise with the Arabs in Palestine. Ben-Gurion rejected their plan, relying instead on his understandings with King Abdullah and opting for an aggressive policy towards the Palestinian Arabs.
- <sup>79</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 39.
- <sup>80</sup> Walid Khalidi, in the early 1960s, was the first scholar to draw the link between Plan Dalet and the pre-meditated expulsion of thousands of Palestinians from the Jerusalem corridor and elsewhere in Palestine. See Khalidi, Walid, "Plan Dalet Revisited," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol XVIII, No 1, Autumn 1988, pp. 3-70.
- <sup>81</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 112.
- <sup>82</sup> The *Palmach* was the *Haganah*'s elite striking force.
- <sup>83</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 247.

- <sup>84</sup> Interview, Tikva Honig-Parnass.
- <sup>85</sup> Ben Gurion, War Diary, Vol. 1, entry dated 6 February, 1948, p. 211, cited in Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, p. 180.
- <sup>86</sup> Weinstock, *Zionism*, p. 237; Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 246.
- <sup>87</sup> Al-Qawuqji, *Memoirs*, entry dated 6 April, 1948, p. 41.
- <sup>88</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 38.
- <sup>89</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 38; Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 47.
- <sup>90</sup> Weinstock, *Zionism*, p. 235.
- <sup>91</sup> Jabotinsky Archives, Tel Aviv, 1/10-4K. Cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 48.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid. p. 48.
- <sup>93</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 173.
- <sup>94</sup> Ibid. p. 173.
- <sup>95</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 48.
- <sup>96</sup> De Reynier, *A Jerusalem*, Editions de la Baconniere, Neuchatel, Switzerland, 1950, cited in Cattar, *The Palestine Question*, p. 252.
- <sup>97</sup> Banks, *Torn Country*, pp. 56-57.
- <sup>98</sup> Weinstock, *Zionism*, p. 235; Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 178. According to an April 14, 1998 lecture at Columbia University by Professor Saleh Abdel Jawad of Bir Zeit University, several villagers, particularly women and children, were killed by the *Palmach* mortar shells as they fled from the village.
- <sup>99</sup> Banks, *Torn Country*, p. 57.
- <sup>100</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 113.
- <sup>101</sup> The number of villagers killed in Deir Yasin is subject to dispute. The long accepted death toll has been that reported in the *New York Times* of April 13, 1948: 254 persons. Professors from Bir Zeit University have recently revised these figures based upon research involving interviews with survivors of the massacre. After comparing the names of those who lived in the village with the names of those who survived, this research concludes that approximately 120 persons were killed.
- <sup>102</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 274. The figures in brackets are in the original text and apparently indicate the age of the children.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid. p. 275.
- <sup>104</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 115.
- <sup>105</sup> 'No Deportations, Evacuations,' *Hadashot*, January 1, 1988, cited in Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, p. 65.
- <sup>106</sup> Dossier 179/110/17/GS, submitted by Richard Catling to Sir Henry Gurney, cited in Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 276.
- <sup>107</sup> *Ha'arets*, 25 April 1993, cited in Finkelstein, *Image and Reality* p. 189.
- <sup>108</sup> De Reynier, *A Jerusalem*, section on Deir Yasin translated by Institute for Palestine Studies and reprinted in Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, p. 764.
- <sup>109</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 279.
- <sup>110</sup> Banks, *Torn Country*, p. 57.
- <sup>111</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 279.

- <sup>112</sup> Ibid. p. 280.
- <sup>113</sup> Interview, Tikva Honig-Parnass.
- <sup>114</sup> Kurzman, Dan, *Genesis, 1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*, p. 181.
- <sup>115</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 181.
- <sup>116</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.
- <sup>117</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 198, (note: in version published by De Capo Press, New York, 1970).
- <sup>118</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 290.
- <sup>119</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 235.
- <sup>120</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.
- <sup>121</sup> Sakakini, *Jerusalem and I*, p. 118.
- <sup>122</sup> De Reynier, *A Jerusalem*, translated and reprinted in Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, p. 765.
- <sup>123</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 97.
- <sup>124</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 68.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid, p. 113.
- <sup>126</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 57.
- <sup>127</sup> Interview, Ali Hassan Elyan and Ahmad Salman.
- <sup>128</sup> David Kroyanker, walking tour of Talbiyeh.
- <sup>129</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 51.
- <sup>130</sup> Ibid. p. 66.
- <sup>131</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.
- <sup>132</sup> De Reynier, *A Jerusalem*, p. 129, cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 100.
- <sup>133</sup> Count Bernadotte-Progress Report UN Doc A/648 p. 47, cited in Cattan, *The Palestine Question*, p. 71.
- <sup>134</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 99.
- <sup>135</sup> Interview, Hagit Shlonsky. Looting by victorious Zionist troops—and by Jewish residents—was a widespread phenomenon, not only in Qatamon and the other occupied Arab neighbourhoods, but throughout Palestine. Tom Segev quotes the Israeli writer Moshe Smilanski: ‘The urge to grab has seized everyone. Individuals, groups and communities, men, women and children, all fell on the spoils. Doors, windows, lintels, bricks, roof-tiles, floor-tiles, junk and machine parts...’ (1949, p. 70.) As an example of how much Arab property was looted by Israelis—and, by extension, how small an effort the Israeli authorities made to protect the property—Segev states that ‘more than 50,000 Arab homes had been abandoned, but only 509 carpets reached the Custodian’s warehouses.’ (1949, p. 71.) Palestinian Arabs also thoroughly looted Jewish convoys and settlements when they succeeded in overcoming them, as in the case of Neve Ya’acov described by John Bagot Glubb (A Soldier, p. 110.)
- <sup>136</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, pp. 194-195.
- <sup>137</sup> Sharif Kanaana, in his book *Still on Vacation!* (p. 108), places the fall of Arab West Jerusalem in the framework of what he terms the Zionists’ “Maxi-Massacre Pattern” in their conquest of large Palestinian cities. According to this pattern, Zionist attacks produced flight and demoralization. A nearby massacre resulted in panic and further flight which greatly facilitated the occupation of the city and its surrounding towns and villages.
- <sup>138</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 27; Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, p. 199.

- <sup>139</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, p. 200.
- <sup>140</sup> Al-Qawuqji, *Memoirs*, entries of 3/5/48 and 4/5/48.
- <sup>141</sup> Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 53.
- <sup>142</sup> Bovis, *The Jerusalem Question*, p. 52; De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 13.
- <sup>143</sup> Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, p. 179.
- <sup>144</sup> De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 45.
- <sup>145</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 393.
- <sup>146</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, p. 393; Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 372.
- <sup>147</sup> Aviva Bar-Am, *Every House a History*, *Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 14, 1990. The Villa Harun al-Rashid was built in 1926 as two apartments in ornate “Thousand and One Nights” style by Hana Bisharat, one of two brothers who owned much property in Talbiyeh. Golda Meir, as the Israeli foreign minister, lived here in the 1960s. When she learned that UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold was coming to visit, she directed her security men to remove a sign with the villa’s name written in Arabic and English from above the side entrance door, supposedly to hide the fact that the house had belonged to an Arab.
- <sup>148</sup> *Jerusalem Post*, Dec. 14, 1990, Aviva Bar-Am, ‘Every House a History.’ The ‘Iraqis’ in question were likely Iraqi soldiers serving with the Arab Liberation Army.
- <sup>149</sup> De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 43.
- <sup>150</sup> Ben-Gurion, David, *Israel: Years of Challenge*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963, p. 40.
- <sup>151</sup> Ben-Gurion, *Israel: Years of Challenge*, p. 41.
- <sup>152</sup> Ben-Gurion, *When Israel Fought* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv, 1975, p. 183, cited in Golani, *Zionism without Zion*, p. 47.
- <sup>153</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 224.
- <sup>154</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 191.
- <sup>155</sup> CIA Report of 17 May, II, p 5 and BBC Report #49, p. 71. Cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 96.
- <sup>156</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p.432.
- <sup>157</sup> Kurzman, *Genesis*, pp. 431-432.
- <sup>158</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 239.
- <sup>159</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 430.
- <sup>160</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 242.
- <sup>161</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 506.
- <sup>162</sup> Al-Tal, *Catastrophe*, Part One, p. 106.
- <sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 115-116.
- <sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* p. 151.
- <sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* p. 151; Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.
- <sup>166</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 476; Interview, Abdullah Budeiri. In his book, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, Glubb explains that the primary reasons that he did not pursue the attack on Notre Dame, or West Jerusalem in general, were his troops’ lack of familiarity with street fighting and his fear that the Israelis would launch a counteroffensive from Jerusalem towards Amman. These reasons may be part of the truth. However, since Glubb was not just guided by military considerations alone, but was answerable to both King Abdullah and London, his rendition is circumspect. It is noteworthy

that in his detailed account of the Jerusalem fighting in May and June 1948, Glubb does not once mention the important role played by Abdullah al-Tal.

<sup>167</sup> Morris, *'48 and After*, p. 11.

<sup>168</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 245.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. p. 247.

<sup>170</sup> Al-Tal, *Catastrophe*, Part One, p.170.

<sup>171</sup> De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 72. De Azcarate provides a detailed eyewitness account of the surrender of the Jewish Quarter to the Arab Legion.

<sup>172</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 104.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Al-Tal, *Catastrophe*, Part One, p. 123; Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 503.

<sup>175</sup> Collins and Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, p. 507. Britain's change of mind was due to pressure from the US, which was threatening to cut off all economic aid to England's war-shattered economy.

<sup>176</sup> The Burma Road was hastily built by the *Haganah* to bypass the Arab Legion positions around Latrun. By this time rifles, machine guns, tanks, field guns, and planes purchased by Israeli agents were flowing into Israel from Europe. Tikva Honig-Parnass (Interview with author), at the time stationed with the *Palmach* in the Jerusalem corridor, remembered that "suddenly we felt like a rich army. Not only did it seem like we had an unlimited supply of weapons, we had enough food and medicine, too."

<sup>177</sup> De Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, p. 99. Whereas the truce clearly allowed the Israeli forces to improve their positions, it cannot wholly be said to have hindered the Arab Legion from pursuing its objective for, as has been shown, it had no plan to conquer West Jerusalem.

<sup>178</sup> Weinstock, *Zionism*, p. 251.

<sup>179</sup> Pappé, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 79.

<sup>180</sup> Mavrides, *Jerusalem Diaries*, Memorandum 2.

<sup>181</sup> Interview, AR.

<sup>182</sup> 'Ayn Karim is one of the few villages whose houses largely remain intact. The village is today populated by Jewish Israelis and is generally considered a very desirable and exclusive place of residence.

<sup>183</sup> Khalidi, *All That Remains*, p. 305.

<sup>184</sup> Interview, Abdullah Budeiri.

<sup>185</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, p. 205.

<sup>186</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 258; Morris, *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 142.

<sup>187</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 202.

<sup>188</sup> Bilby, *New Star*, p. 202.

<sup>189</sup> Golani, *Zionism without Zion*, p. 48. Dov Joseph had been a member of the Jewish Agency's Popular Transfer Committee which, before 1948, had laid out detailed plans for the expulsion of Palestinian Arabs from the future Jewish state. (Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, p. 93.)

<sup>190</sup> Golani, *Zionism without Zion*, p. 48.

<sup>191</sup> Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, p 823, cited in Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, p. 48.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid. p. 48.

- <sup>193</sup> Cattan, *The Palestine Question*, p. 253.
- <sup>194</sup> Israel has not, to this day, canceled the state of emergency, which provides legal justification for detention without trial and military censorship of the press.
- <sup>195</sup> Proceeds from these transactions, minus legal and administrative expenses, are to be held in a special fund, presumably for the absentees, until the state of emergency is declared over.
- <sup>196</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 35.
- <sup>197</sup> Ibid. p. 35.
- <sup>198</sup> Ibid. p. 37.
- <sup>199</sup> Ibid. p. 38.
- <sup>200</sup> Ibid. p. 40.
- <sup>201</sup> Ibid. p. 41.
- <sup>202</sup> Ibid. p. 44.
- <sup>203</sup> Ibid. pp. 44-45 and 64.
- <sup>204</sup> Segev, *1949*, p.70.
- <sup>205</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, pp. 207-214.
- <sup>206</sup> Interview, Hannah Levy.
- <sup>207</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>208</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 193.
- <sup>209</sup> Segev, *1949*, p. 88.
- <sup>210</sup> Ibid. p. 88.
- <sup>211</sup> Cattan, *Jerusalem*, p. 61.
- <sup>212</sup> UN Document A/648, p. 14.
- <sup>213</sup> Washington National Record Center, Suitland, Maryland, RG84, cited in Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 101.
- <sup>214</sup> Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, p. 101.
- <sup>215</sup> Plascov, *The Palestinian Refugees*, p. 37.
- <sup>216</sup> Perowne, *The One Remains*, p.16.
- <sup>217</sup> Ibid. p. 22.
- <sup>218</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 49.
- <sup>219</sup> Segev, *1949*, p. 14.
- <sup>220</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 383.
- <sup>221</sup> Ibid. p. 383.
- <sup>222</sup> Golani, *Zionism without Zion*, p. 49.
- <sup>223</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 194.
- <sup>224</sup> Jordan-Israel armistice agreement, Article II, Section 2, cited in Weinstock, *Zionism*, p. 240.
- <sup>225</sup> Transjordan became Jordan, with its former kingdom on the River Jordan's East Bank supplemented by the Palestinian West Bank.
- <sup>226</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 538.
- <sup>227</sup> Pappe, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 195.
- <sup>228</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan*, p. 538; Pappe, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 197.

- <sup>229</sup> Mavrides, *Jerusalem Diaries*, Memorandum 4.
- <sup>230</sup> Perowne, *The One Remains*, p. 22. See Perowne for a detailed description of East Jerusalem life in the early 1950s.
- <sup>231</sup> Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, p. 193.
- <sup>232</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, p. 219.
- <sup>233</sup> Interview, Ahmad Salman.
- <sup>234</sup> Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem*, p. 217.
- <sup>235</sup> *Ibid.* p. 222.
- <sup>236</sup> Cattán, *Jerusalem*, p. 58.
- <sup>237</sup> Official Records of the 3rd session of the General Assembly, Ad Hoc Political Committee, 1949, Part II, p. 223, cited in Cattán, *Jerusalem*, p. 59.
- <sup>238</sup> Official Records of the 3rd session of the General Assembly, Ad Hoc Political Committee, 1949, Part II, pp. 286-7 (emphasis added), Cited *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- <sup>239</sup> Official Records of the 3rd session of the General Assembly, Ad Hoc Political Committee, 1949, Part II, p. 286, cited in Cattán, *Jerusalem*, p. 60.
- <sup>240</sup> Neff, *Fallen Pillars*, p. 133.
- <sup>241</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 194. The four-year plan was presented to the Knesset on March 8, 1949.
- <sup>242</sup> Cattán, *Jerusalem*, p. 61.
- <sup>243</sup> Central Zionist Archives, letter from Yoseftal to Greenberg, 13/4/49. Cited in Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 54; Segev, 1949, p. 78.
- <sup>244</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 55.
- <sup>245</sup> Segev, 1949, p. 78.
- <sup>246</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 62.
- <sup>247</sup> *Ibid.* p. 58.
- <sup>248</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 203.
- <sup>249</sup> Golan, *Shinui hamapa hayishuvit*, p. 58.
- <sup>250</sup> Neff, *Fallen Pillars*, p. 135.
- <sup>251</sup> Bilby, *New Star in the Middle East*, p. 194.
- <sup>252</sup> *Ha'aretz*, September 18, 1949.
- <sup>253</sup> Neff, *Fallen Pillars*, p. 135.
- <sup>254</sup> Segev, 1949, p. 41.
- <sup>255</sup> *Ibid.* p. 41.
- <sup>256</sup> Shlaim, *Collusion*, p. 536.
- <sup>257</sup> Ben-Gurion, *Diary*, December 14, 1949, Ben-Gurion Archives, cited in Golani, *Zionism Without Zion*, p. 50.
- <sup>258</sup> Golani, *Zionism Without Zion*, p. 51.
- <sup>259</sup> Neff, *Fallen Pillars*, p. 133.
- <sup>260</sup> *Ibid.* Neff attributes this shift in US policy as succumbing to both *realpolitik* and pressure from Israel's American supporters.
- <sup>261</sup> UN Trusteeship Council Resolution 114 (S-2).

<sup>262</sup> Nijim and Bishara, *Toward the De-Arabization of Palestine/Israel 1945-1977*, p. 58.

<sup>263</sup> Hudson, *The Transformation of Jerusalem*, p. 259.

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Hannah Levy with the author, Musrara, Jerusalem, May 7, 1997.

AR with the author, Bethlehem, June 5, 1997.

Ahmad Salman with the author, Beit Safafa, May 28, 1997.

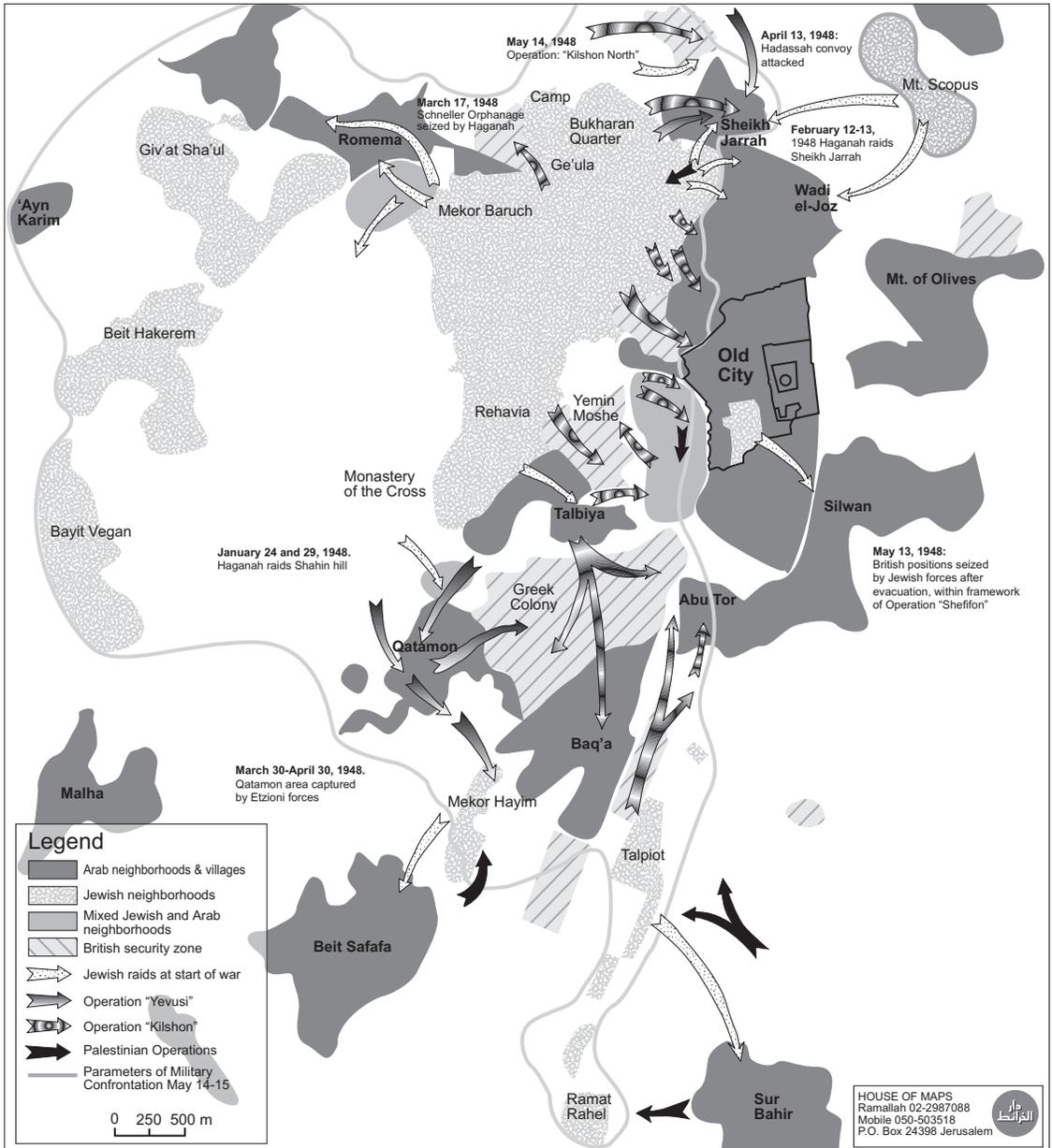
Hagit Shlonsky with the author, May 1, 1997.

**Other**

Walking tour of Talbiyeh with David Kroyanker, May 24, 1997.

Map 3

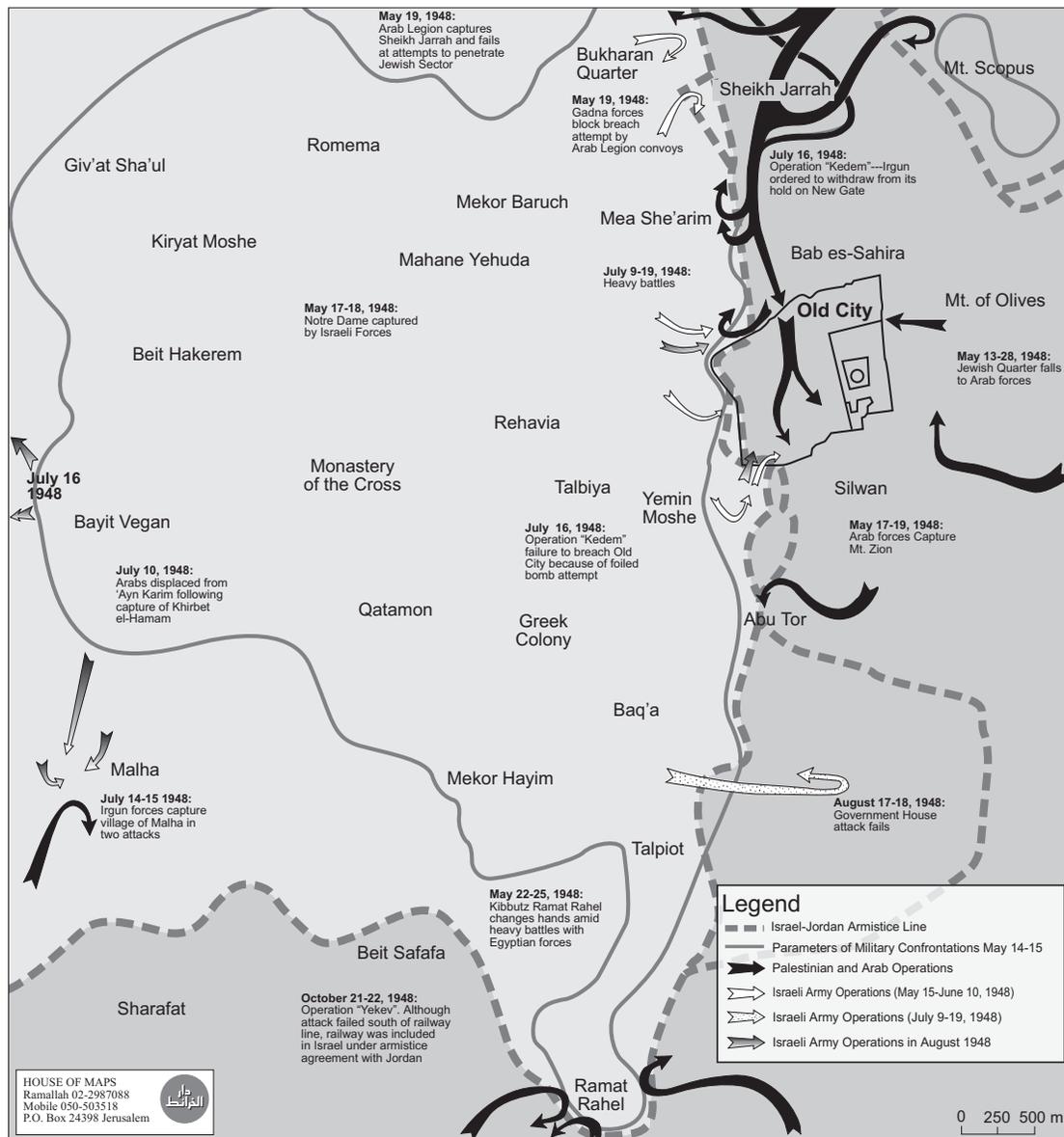
# Fighting and Operations in Jerusalem up until May 15, 1948



Adapted from Dan Bahat, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1990, and Bahjat Abu Gharbiyyeh, *Fi khidam an-Nidal*, 1916-1949. Beirut: IPS, 1993.

## Map 4

# Fighting and Operations in Jerusalem after 15 May, 1948



Adapted from Dan Bahat, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1990, and Bahjat Abu Gharbiyyeh, *Fi khidam an-Nidal, 1916-1949*. Beirut: IPS, 1993.