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UNDERSTANDING MUSLIM PREJUDICES TOWARD
ISRAEL DURING THE BRITISH MANDATE PERIOD IN
PALESTINE: HOW THE U.S. CAN WIN THE HEARTS AND
MINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

by

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Introduction

America's viewpoint on terrorism changed dramatically on September 11, 2001. The people of the United States had no idea that an organization on the other side of the world, with a deep hatred for our country, would plan a detailed attack in order to produce as many civilian casualties as possible and disrupt the very fabric of our democratic society. In New York City, hijacked commercial airplanes flew into, and destroyed, two of the tallest buildings in America that represented the financial capitol of our country. In Washington, D.C., a hijacked airliner crashed into the Pentagon building, the headquarters of the most powerful military in the world. A fourth hijacked airliner crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, killing all passengers onboard, and whose intended target was likely the White House or the U.S. Capitol. The combination of events that day transformed our country from a nation at peace, enjoying the prosperity of capitalism and freedom, to a nation beginning a war of unknown length, against an enemy who uses terrorist tactics to strike non-combatants and engage in unconventional warfare against our military.

The enemy, Al Qaeda, has declared war against "Jews and Crusaders" (Israel and America) as stated through a prominent member of its leadership circle, Osama bin Laden, and links the U.S. with Israel through U.S. support for Israel¹. Bin Laden's declaration stated that the "ruling to kill the Americans and their allies – civilians and military – is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim"². While this statement was made in 1998, it was not on the mind of most Americans on 9/11. After America began strikes on the Taliban in Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda stated that "Bush is an agent of Israel, he

sacrifices his people and his economy for them, the Israelis, and helps them occupy the land of Muslims”³. In 2001, the United States indeed supported Israel “both monetarily (\$840 million annually in economic aid and \$3 billion in military aid) and militarily (in past wars against Arab states and today – American F-16 fighter jets and missiles are used against the Palestinians)”⁴. What is also an important point to note is that “President Harry S Truman, who had led the American people in support of the creation of a Jewish nation, led the United States in 1948 to become the first nation to recognize the newly reborn State of Israel”⁵.

While most Americans might view Al-Qaeda’s statements as radical ideas from a terrorist group, Al-Qaeda and other Muslim terrorist organizations (and Muslim governments) have managed to influence Muslim public opinion against the creation, and continued existence of, the State of Israel since the British Mandate of Palestine in 1920. In fact, Muslim countries have never recognized the State of Israel and still refer to that territory as Palestine⁶. The question is then: how does Islamic extremist propaganda against the creation of the State of Israel influence Muslim public opinion against Israel and the United States today, and how should the U.S. combat this propaganda?

The implications of the Global War on Terror

The United States, and Israel for that matter, is engaged in a costly war that can last for decades. Israel has fought in multiple wars just to maintain its existence, and the Palestinians continue to conduct terrorist acts against the general population. Since 9/11, the United States and coalition allies have aggressively pursued Al-Qaeda and its umbrella terrorist organizations. The U.S. also defeated the Taliban government in Afghanistan, and the dictator Saddam Hussein’s government in Iraq. In both of those countries, the U.S. continues to fight remnants of the old regimes and Al-Qaeda affiliates. While winning the war on the ground, the U.S. is

having a difficult time with winning public opinion among Muslims, whom many believe Al-Qaeda propaganda. If the United States is not able to gain popular support among the Muslim countries, then we may be fighting Islamic extremists indefinitely. This will cost many billions of dollars and, more importantly, many more lives.

Since the U.S. is at war with an organization that has no country, no geographical boundary, and does not fight in a military versus military style of warfare, the U.S. has to diminish public support for radical Islam and marginalize their cause. Islamic extremists use propaganda in the media, at rallies, in mosques, and today, on the internet, to advance their agenda with the public against the West, namely the U.S. and Israel. However, in order to minimize terrorism and stabilize the Middle East, Muslim governments need to recognize Israel's right to exist and end terrorism against Israel and the United States. To accomplish this, the U.S. needs a long term, aggressive public affairs strategy that creates widespread understanding through religious, cultural, and political interaction between Muslim countries, and the United States and Israel; at the same time, this strategy must discredit those people and organizations that spread animosity, hatred and anti-Judeo/Christian rhetoric toward the U.S. and Israel. This paper will examine the methods of propaganda using a historical methodology.

Background: History of the Land of Milk and Honey

In order to facilitate understanding between Muslims, Jews, and Christians, one must first discuss the history of the land at issue, especially since many of today's conflicts developed over ancient claims. The common thread between all three of these religions is Abraham. The Old Testament of the Bible discusses the covenant between God and Abraham. One portion of the Old Testament establishes the covenant to Abraham and his descendants the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates"⁷. At that time, the land was called Canaan.

The book of Numbers chapter 34 verses two through 12 specifically defines the boundaries⁸. The covenant includes the current borders of Israel, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and portions of Lebanon and Syria. Abraham had a son born out of wedlock named Ishmael, whose descendant is reportedly the Muslim prophet Muhammed⁹. God passed on the covenant to Abraham's firstborn son from his wife Sarah, named Isaac¹⁰. In order to test Abraham's faith, God spoke to Abraham and told Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God at Moriah, which is the current location of the Dome of the Rock shrine in Jerusalem¹¹. Before Abraham slew his son with the knife, an angel came down from Heaven to stop Abraham from commencing the sacrifice¹².

The location of this event became an important part of Judeo Christian heritage. When the Jews returned from bondage in Egypt, they fought many battles (including fighting against the Philistines, whose name has been attributed to the region Palestine) to establish their place in the land of Canaan that was promised to them by God. During the tenth century B.C., Israeli King Solomon authorized the construction of the first Temple and supervised its completion at the sight of Mount Moriah where the sacrifice of Isaac was to take place approximately one thousand years earlier¹³. Israel was divided into two kingdoms over time and saw six different conquerors over the next one thousand years.

Jewish exile for nearly 2,000 years

The final conquerors of biblical times were the Romans. During the first century A.D., many Jews looked for the biblical deliverer to liberate them from the Romans. When Jesus began his ministry, many thought that he would lead the Jews militarily. Since this did not happen, and he was crucified by the Romans as requested by the Jewish religious leaders, the Jewish people continued to look for a way to gain their freedom. Their failed revolt in the latter

half of the first century caused the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans and led to the Romans exiling nearly all of the Jews and dispersing them throughout the Empire. The Romans, upon exiling the Jews, renamed the region Palestine (without specifying borders) and renamed Jerusalem “Aelia Capitolina” in order to remove any link of the Jews to the area¹⁴. From the first century to the 19th century, only a small remnant of Jews remained in Jerusalem¹⁵.

After the crucifixion of Jesus, Jesus’ followers spread his message to various parts of the Roman Empire. The new religion, Christianity, spread slowly and initially drew persecution from the Roman government. Christianity gained toleration and acceptance in the fourth century under the encouragement of Emperor Constantine¹⁶. The eastern part of the Roman Empire became the Byzantine Empire (Christian) and controlled the Palestine region until the seventh Century¹⁷. In the seventh century, the Persians took control of the Palestine region for a short time until the emerging Arab Islamic Empire took the land by conquest¹⁸.

The creation and spread of the Islamic Empire

Islam started in the seventh century trade cities of Mecca and Medina by the prophet Mohammed¹⁹. In the late sixth century, Christian bishops from the African side of the Red Sea conducted missions to the camps of Arab-Bedouin tribes in an attempt to bring Christianity to the Arabs²⁰. During the missions, the Bedouin tribes fought against, and defeated, Persians in Arabia²¹. Mohammed grew up during these events as a member of one of the tribes in Mecca²². By 613 A.D., he began teaching Islam as a third testament of monotheism and referring to the deity as Allah²³. His teachings, while at first were rejected by tribal leaders resulting in his exile to Medina, eventually became accepted through his conquest and unification of the Bedouin tribes into an Islamic state²⁴. Among his teachings are that it was Ishmael, not Isaac, who was offered as a sacrifice at Moriah²⁵. After his death in 632, Omar, the second caliph

(representative of the Prophet), began the spread of the empire by taking Damascus and Jerusalem²⁶. This is the first Arab control of the Palestine region and Jerusalem.

The Arabs held Jerusalem until 1071, when Jerusalem was taken over by the Seljuk Turks²⁷. The Seljuk Turks also defeated the Byzantines in Armenia, causing the Byzantines to ask the pope and western kings for assistance²⁸. Pope Urban II answered the call in 1095 by proclaiming a Holy War, which resulted in the Christian crusaders taking Jerusalem in 1099²⁹. The Christians committed atrocities to both Muslims and Jews during their rule³⁰. The Christians held on to Jerusalem until a Muslim leader, Saladin, defeated the army in Jerusalem in 1187³¹. Another army, the Mongols, conquered their way through Baghdad all the way to Syria³². In 1260, Mamluk Turks from Egypt defeated the Mongols near Nazareth³³. The Mamluks held Jerusalem until 1517, when the Ottoman Turks took over³⁴. The Ottomans held it until they were defeated in World War I, setting up the British Mandate³⁵.

Analysis of the Zionist Movement and the British Mandate

As George Santayana, a notable philosopher, once said “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it”³⁶. On this note, it is important for all parties to understand how the State of Israel came into being. In the late 19th Century, European Jews began immigrating to Palestine in order to escape religious persecution³⁷. The mass immigration became known as the Zionist movement and brought with it the hopes of reestablishing the State of Israel³⁸. When the Jews arrived in Palestine, which under the Ottoman Turks was considered part of Greater Syria, they purchased and developed land, hiring Arab workers to cultivate it³⁹. This immigration continued until World War I.

During and after World War I, several agreements were made between multiple parties creating confusion, and at times anarchic situations in Palestine. These agreements were

intended to clarify control of the different regions of the Ottoman Empire when the Turks were defeated at the end of World War I. The agreements resulted in the seeds being sown for the future conflict between the Arabs and Israelis. In 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, sent a correspondence to Ali Ibn Hussain, the Sherif of Mecca, requesting Arab support to the British against Turkey and offering postwar support for Arab independence⁴⁰. The offer excluded the region that is today's Israel, West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Lebanon. In May of 1916, the British and French entered into a secret agreement with each other, called the Sykes-Picot Agreement that divided Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq into British and French control zones and zones of influence⁴¹. Within the British government, the foreign secretary, Arthur James Balfour, negotiated with the representative of the Jewish entity, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, for "the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People" resulting in the Balfour Declaration in 1917⁴². Emir Feisal, the third son of Sherif Hussain, joined his Arab forces with the British forces to rout the Turks out of Palestine and Syria. Feisal had joined the Allies with the promise from Great Britain that an independent Arab state would be created after the war.

The British Mandate for Palestine

After the defeat of the Turks in 1918, negotiations between Emir Feisal, the representative of "the only recognized Arab leader in the world", and Dr. Weizmann representing the Jews, were fruitful⁴³. On January 3, 1919, the Emir and Dr. Weizmann agreed that each of them would recognize the Balfour Declaration for a Jewish National Home in Palestine and assist in the development of an independent Arab state⁴⁴. Feisal made the agreement on the condition that Britain honors the previous agreement for Arab independence⁴⁵. As a result of the Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France, Syria came under French

control and France deposed Feisal as King of Syria. With the promises by the British government not being met, Feisal withdrew support for the agreement. In order to compensate for the injustice, Britain offered Feisal the Kingdom of Iraq, which he accepted and ruled until his death in 1933⁴⁶.

The newly established League of Nations entrusted the mandate for the region known at the time as Palestine, which encompassed today's Israel, Jordan, Gaza Strip, and West Bank, to Great Britain⁴⁷. Great Britain was tasked with the "responsibility for putting into effect the declaration...in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people"⁴⁸. In March 1920, the first Arab riots took place in Jerusalem, which resulted in Jewish deaths⁴⁹. During the riots, British military authorities did not intervene and arrested Jews for "organizing a self-defense league"⁵⁰. These events led to the secret creation of the first Jewish defense force called the "Haganah"⁵¹. As a result of Arabs rioting from 1920 to 1921, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill issued the 1922 White Paper, which partitioned the Palestine Mandate at the Jordan River⁵². The eastern portion was called Transjordan and allowed only Arabs on that side, honoring the McMahon letter to Sherif Hussain of 1915 and attempting to ease tensions between both sides⁵³. The period from 1922 to 1928 was relatively peaceful⁵⁴.

Tensions Resume and Escalate

In late 1928, minor disputes between Jews and Arabs arose from Jews praying at the Western Wall⁵⁵. These disputes heated up until, in August of 1929, the Arabs again rioted this time killing 133 Jews, including 67 in Hebron⁵⁶. The British authorities were alerted the day before of an impending riot⁵⁷. During the riot, the "British police did nothing to protect the Jews or stop the violence"⁵⁸. The resulting investigation concluded that Arabs had "racial animosity"

toward the Jews and feared economic domination by them⁵⁹. Due partly to the severity of the riots, the British police indifference, and the self-restraint that the Haganah had in protecting the Jews, a group splintered off from the Haganah in 1931, called the Irgun⁶⁰. This group was more concerned with repelling Arab riots instead of exercising restraint and was accused of terrorism in the 1940s.

In 1936, riots again broke out and led to a campaign of terror⁶¹. Arabs targeted both Jews, British soldiers and British police, who started cracking down on the violence when they became the victims⁶². The riots ended in late 1936, but resumed less than a year later, continuing until early 1939⁶³. This riot period was known as the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 and a total of 415 Jews were killed⁶⁴. In the summer of 1937 during the temporary halt in the rioting, the Peel Commission Report was published following an investigation of the 1936 riots⁶⁵. The Peel Commission concluded that Britain would not be able to maintain the status quo for the Palestine Mandate, and it would not fulfill the Mandate by giving independence to either the Jews or the Arabs⁶⁶. The conclusion was that Palestine must be partitioned again into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem and the Bethlehem area under an international trusteeship⁶⁷. The Jews rejected the borders, but agreed to a partition⁶⁸. The Arabs rejected the proposal completely due to desiring all of Palestine as an Arab State⁶⁹. The riots started again after the report was complete and lasted until early 1939⁷⁰.

In July 1938, the U.S. led a conference at Evian, France in order to attempt to solve the Jewish refugee problem caused by aggressive German military actions in Europe⁷¹. Countries from Europe and the Americas attended, 33 in all⁷². While the countries that attended expressed sympathy for the refugees, only the Dominican Republic offered large scale sanctuary for the Jews⁷³. The Woodhead Commission was another British attempt to come to a solution, but its

partition plan was rejected by the British as it was published⁷⁴. Finally, the last conference prior to World War II, the St. James Conference, produced no agreements⁷⁵. The pre-World War II period ended with the McDonald White Paper of 1939 which, after attempting to resolve issues between the Arabs and Jews, violated the Balfour Declaration and greatly limited immigration at a time when Jews were undergoing severe persecution in Europe on the eve of war⁷⁶. Jews were disheartened at perceived discrimination from the British during much of the Mandate period, not to mention apathy regarding rioting and the brutal murder of Jews, and developed a dislike that turned into hatred after World War II⁷⁷.

World War II: the Beginning of the End of the British Mandate

The White Paper outraged Jews, but since the British were going to war against Hitler and Germany, the common enemy of the Jews, most Jews grudgingly supported the British⁷⁸. One exception was a Jewish underground organization, called Lehi, which split from Irgun due to Lehi members desiring to continue a military struggle against the British government during World War II⁷⁹. Lehi was condemned by the Jewish Agency and the British police⁸⁰. Nevertheless, they continued conducting operations against the British throughout the war⁸¹. At the end of the war, Jews stepped up attacks against the British, driven by the images of the Holocaust and British policy restricting immigration leading up to World War II⁸². While the Transjordan gained full independence in 1946 as the Kingdom of Jordan, Britain turned over the problem of Palestine to the United Nations in 1947⁸³.

The United Nations created a committee that developed a partition plan that was approved on November 29, 1947⁸⁴. While Jews celebrated, neighboring Arab countries rejected the resolution and announced that they would fight implementation⁸⁵. The next day, “a bus

carrying Jewish passengers was attacked by rifle fire...and five of the passengers were killed”⁸⁶. The U.N. scheduled independence for May 15, 1948⁸⁷. As the British pulled their forces out of defense zones, five different Arab countries invaded the new independent State of Israel, and so the Israeli War of Independence began⁸⁸. From 1948 to the present, Israel has been involved in five major wars and multiple anti-terrorism operations⁸⁹.

Analyzing Propaganda used by Islamic Extremists

When analyzing Islamic extremist propaganda during the British Mandate period, one has to start with the Arab, Haj Amin al-Husseini, who was the son of an aristocratic family from Jerusalem⁹⁰. Al-Husseini once told a native Jew that he worked with, “this was and will remain an Arab land... the Zionists, will be massacred to the last man. We want no progress, no prosperity. Nothing but the sword will decide the fate of this country”⁹¹. Al-Husseini had voluntarily joined the Turkish Army during World War I, but switched sides in 1917 when the British were campaigning for Palestine⁹². Al-Husseini stated, during an interview with Dutch Canadian journalist Pierre Van Passen regarding the Arab plight in Palestine, that the Palestinian Arabs had just “shaken off the Turkish yoke and turned up the road of freedom”⁹³. When confronted by the reporter, “‘Did your eminence not serve as a volunteer in the Turkish Army?’ Husseini got up and left the room”⁹⁴. In 1920, he instigated the riots of that year by inciting anger among Arabs directed against Jews “who were praying at the Western Wall”⁹⁵. He was sentenced to 15 years hard labor, but escaped and fled to Syria⁹⁶. The British allowed him to return to Palestine to appease the Arabs, and then the new Palestine High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, appointed him Grand Mufti of Jerusalem⁹⁷. From this new religious and political position, he orchestrated propaganda and terrorism in order to undermine efforts to establish a Jewish State.

Racial Aggression, Followed by Appeasement

The Haycraft Commission investigating the 1920-1921 riots determined that the racial strife was begun by the Arabs and characterized Arabs as the aggressor⁹⁸. However, due to propaganda disseminated by the Arabs, the attacks were rationalized by the commission as being caused by political and economic issues brought on by Jewish immigration⁹⁹. In 1922, the British took a key step to ease Arab anxieties by establishing Transjordan, for Arabs only, in the eastern portion of the Mandate for Palestine, comprising 76 per cent of the Mandate¹⁰⁰. This document, the Churchill White Paper of 1922, attempted to satisfy the intent of the McMahon Letter to Sherif Hussain by setting aside the land specified in the letter for a future independent Arab State in the Mandate for Palestine¹⁰¹. Churchill points out that the promise to Sherif Hussain excluded “the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan”¹⁰². The future independence of Transjordan, along with Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Egypt, clearly achieved the pledge of McMahon to Sherif Hussain, but propaganda and terrorism prove to deny that fact from Arab public opinion.

In 1929, al-Husseini’s propaganda machine was again at work inciting Arabs “by accusing the Jews of endangering the mosques and other sites holy to Islam”¹⁰³. The dispute was initially over the right of Jews to pray at the Western Wall, the result was al-Husseini calling out to the Arabs, “Itback al-Yahud!” (Slaughter the Jews!)¹⁰⁴. Rumors spread throughout the country of Jewish attempts to defile Moslem holy places which caused widespread rioting¹⁰⁵. It was falsely reported that Jews were murdering Arabs in Hebron in order to spread the rioting there¹⁰⁶. Angry Jerusalem Arabs went to Hebron and broke into houses in order to kill families of Jews¹⁰⁷. The remaining Jews in Hebron were “exiled from their homes” and “for the next 39 years, no Jew lived in Hebron”¹⁰⁸. In a striking display of blatant propaganda, the Mufti al-

Husseini distributed “bogus photographs of the Mosque of Omar showing the Muslim shrine on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount supposedly in ruins, destroyed by the Jews” and the “Mufti’s dissemination of photographs of slaughtered Jews in Hebron in 1929 with the claim that the dead were Arabs killed by Jews”¹⁰⁹. In actuality, Pierre Van Passen saw the results of the mutilated, dead Jews as he tried to “gather up the severed the sexual organs and the cut-off women’s breasts we had seen lying scattered over the floor and in the beds”¹¹⁰.

Following the 1929 riots, several investigations and policy updates attempted to solve the causes of the tension. The results of the investigations caused anger at the British from both sides. Complaints from the Arab side were what amounted to be propaganda intended to influence the commissions against the continued Jewish immigration to Palestine. However, the Jewish immigrants were not only purchasing land legally, but also paying “compensation to squatters which was not legally required”¹¹¹. While Arabs complained about Jewish immigration and economic difficulties to Arabs as a result of it, both the British Governor of Sinai and the Hope-Simpson Commission reported that Arabs were entering the region illegally from Egypt, Transjordan, and Syria¹¹². Excluding this hypocrisy of the Arab illegal immigration, the British Governor of the Sinai states “it is very difficult to make a case out for the misery of the *Arabs* if at the same time their compatriots from adjoining states *could not be kept from going in to share that misery*”¹¹³. As a result of the 1929 riots, the immigration policy update by the British was continued control of Jewish immigration by the government¹¹⁴.

The Last Straw for the Mufti in Palestine

In 1936, the Mufti al-Husseini again initiated unrest by calling for an Arab general strike¹¹⁵. As al-Husseini orchestrated violence against Jews and British forces, he complained about Jewish immigration and Jewish purchases of land in Palestine¹¹⁶. Besides murdering Jews

and non-compliant Arabs, he recruited Arabs for militias and raised funds from both the Muslim world and Germany using anti-Jewish propaganda¹¹⁷. In January of 1937, he was brought before the Royal Commission in Palestine to explain his grievances¹¹⁸. It was pointed out by Sir Hammond that the Mufti's claims were baseless on the fact that Arabs freely sold their lands to Jews¹¹⁹. The Mufti's position was that economic hardship caused the Arabs to sell their land¹²⁰. The Mufti also stated that the standard of living was worse since the British took over Palestine from the Turks¹²¹. Sir Hammond counters with the fact that taxation was lighter, there was no conscription since the British took over, and education was better¹²². The Mufti maintained that Palestine was better off when the Turks were in control, and he offered little basis for that position¹²³. As the revolt continued, al-Husseini was forced into exile to Syria¹²⁴. Documents from the Nuremburg trials after the war connect Nazi Germany SS support with financing al-Husseini's revolt¹²⁵.

Several documents associated al-Husseini's connection with the Nazi regime in Germany. In 1940, the Mufti asked Germany and Italy "to settle the question of Jewish elements in Palestine and other Arab countries in accordance with the national and racial interests of the Arabs and along the lines similar to those used to solve the Jewish question in Germany and Italy"¹²⁶. In 1941 while exiled in Baghdad, al-Husseini issued a fatwa (Muslim religious judgment) against Britain leading a pro-German coup¹²⁷. His followers then "went on a murderous rampage against Baghdad's Jewish community"¹²⁸. After the coup was put down by the British, al-Husseini escaped via Tehran to Italy¹²⁹. In Italy, he met with Mussolini who was also against the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine and said that the Jews should "establish Tel Aviv in America"¹³⁰. Similar sentiments have been echoed by some of today's leaders in the Mid-East, such as the President Ahmadinejad from Iran who suggested "a state of Israel should

be established on their [Germany and Austria] soil” due to those countries belief in the Jewish massacre of the Holocaust¹³¹.

Al-Husseini Meets with Hitler

In November of 1941, al-Husseini met with Hitler and discussed plans for the final solution of the Jews in Palestine¹³². The Mufti wanted a combined declaration with Germany and Italy to “recognize the illegality of the Jewish National Home in Palestine” and to “recognize the right of Palestine and other Arab countries to solve the question of the Jewish elements in Palestine and in other Arab countries as required by national Arab interests, and in the same way as the Jewish question in the Axis lands is being solved”¹³³. During the meeting, which Hitler wanted al-Husseini to keep secret, Hitler stated that after the Germans defeated the “Judeo-Bolsheviks”, they would “reach the Southern Caucasus” then issue the declaration supporting Arab liberation¹³⁴. Hitler also stated that “Germany has no ambitions in this area but cares only to annihilate the power which produces the Jews”¹³⁵. Germany hosted the Mufti for the rest of the war in exchange for his support.

Al-Husseini spread propaganda through messages on the radio. In Berlin, he made the call to Muslims saying to “kill the Jews – kill them with your hands, kill them with your teeth – this is well pleasing to Allah!”¹³⁶. After the Allied victory in El Alamein, he called on Arabs not to lose heart due to Rommel’s defeat¹³⁷. The Mufti planned “the construction of a death camp outside Nablus to implement the final solution of the Jewish problem in the region”¹³⁸. He also called for Muslims to “slaughter Jews wherever you find them. Their spilled blood pleases Allah, our history and religion. That will save our honor”¹³⁹. In a broadcast from Rome in 1943, al-Husseini stated “I therefore know that those Arab emigrants in America will refrain from helping Roosevelt or taking part in a war which he brought on to his country”¹⁴⁰.

Amin al-Husseini also intervened in prisoner releases in order to prevent Jews from escaping the death camps and immigrating to Palestine. In 1942, the Red Cross attempted to exchange German civilians for 10,000 Jewish children with SS Chief Heinrich Himmler¹⁴¹. Al-Husseini protested the deal, which was cancelled, “warning him that the little Jews would soon become big Jews”¹⁴². In June of 1943, he sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary asking him not to let Jews living in Hungary leave the country for Palestine¹⁴³. In all, 900 Jewish children and 100 adults were prevented from leaving Hungary during this request from the Mufti, and he said it would be “preferable to send them to other countries where they would find themselves under active control, for example, in Poland”¹⁴⁴. This set the precedent for the remaining Jews attempting to leave Hungary. The Mufti also learned of a deal between Adolf Eichmann, who at the time was the deputy SS intelligence chief, and the British government to exchange German POWs for 5000 Jewish children¹⁴⁵. The Mufti was successful in preventing the exchange resulting in the children being sent to death camps in Poland¹⁴⁶.

In 1943, the Mufti brought his propaganda to Bosnia by organizing Bosnian Muslim SS units (Hanjar Troopers, meaning sword)¹⁴⁷. These units participated in the massacre of civilians in Bosnia and security in Hungary¹⁴⁸. Fortunately, Al-Husseini failed in his attempts to spread the extermination of the Jews to North Africa and Palestine¹⁴⁹. “In his memoirs he wrote: ‘Our fundamental condition for cooperating with Germany was a free hand to eradicate every last Jew from Palestine and the Arab world. I asked Hitler for an explicit undertaking to allow us to solve the Jewish problem in a manner befitting our national and racial aspirations and according to the scientific methods innovated by Germany in the handling of its Jews. The answer I got was: ‘The Jews are yours’”¹⁵⁰.

The Aftermath of World War II

At the end of World War II, al-Husseini fled to Switzerland, then France, then to Cairo, Egypt¹⁵¹. While he committed many war crimes and was indicted by Yugoslavia for forming the Bosnian Muslim SS units, he escaped prosecution and was never tried because “the Allies were afraid of the storm in the Arab world if the hero of Arab nationalism was treated as a war criminal”¹⁵². The Mufti participated in the Israeli War for Independence and gave way to other Muslim leaders after the war¹⁵³. Most notably, “his place as leader of the radical, nationalist Palestinian Arabs was taken by his nephew Mohammed Abdel-Raouf Arafat As Qudwa al-Husseini, better known as Yasser Arafat”¹⁵⁴. Arafat had shortened his name to “disguise his family ties”¹⁵⁵.

In spite of the Arab resistance to an independent State of Israel, the United Nations partitioned Palestine into two independent states for Jews and Arabs. While the Jews were satisfied, the Arabs wanted all of Palestine and went to war over it. The Arab nations attacking Israel encouraged the Arabs that were living within the Israeli border to temporarily leave Israel until the victory over Israel was complete. Since Israel was never defeated, the refugees have remained in camps and have become a propaganda tool for the Palestine Liberation Organization, and now the Palestinian Authority. While over 800,000 Jews were expelled from Arab countries and absorbed into the small country of Israel, the Arab nations refused to take in the 500,000 Arab refugees that existed at the time into their countries¹⁵⁶.

The attempted pro-Nazi coup in Iraq of 1941 led by the Mufti inspired another infamous individual. A member of that coup attempt was Khayrallah Tulfah¹⁵⁷. In 1947, Tulfah took in his ten year old nephew, Saddam Hussein¹⁵⁸. Tulfah filled Saddam with pro-Nazi propaganda and Saddam would prove to be a menace to the Middle Eastern region. Also out of World War

II, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt all developed Social Nationalist pro-Nazi parties that would prove to be an integral part of their governments¹⁵⁹.

Issues and Implications to Today's Middle East

The strength of the hatred generated from the Arabs toward the Jews echoes in today's context, and this hatred has increasingly focused on America also. Since bin Laden and Al-Qaeda declared war on the U.S., due in large part to our continued support for Israel, America has been fighting a war of ideology. The Al-Qaeda extremist Muslim ideology spreads propaganda that attempts to persuade Muslims to take up arms against the United States. The propaganda also tries to persuade the U.S. from continuing to support the Israelis and for our military to leave Arab countries. While the U.S. will continue to support Israel, extremist Muslims will not quit until they have met the goals of expelling the U.S. from Muslim lands and wiping Israel off of the map. The propaganda topics used today against Israel are the right to exist, Jewish claims to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the Arab refugees' right to return to their land, and denial of the Holocaust.

The Arabs have made claims that their ancestors predated the Jews in Palestine and therefore have the right to the land. They have claimed ancestry from the Jebusites, the Philistines, the Canaanites, and from Ishmael. The Jebusites disappeared from history during the tenth century B.C. and the Philistines during the sixth century B.C., when the Philistines were taken captive by the Babylonians¹⁶⁰. The Canaanites last traces were during the second century B.C. at the latest¹⁶¹. As for Ishmael, it is uncertain "whether Muhammad's claimed connection with Ishmael was on the basis of a preserved tradition or on account of taking over traditions in Judaism (as done in other aspects of Islam)"¹⁶². Arabs have also claimed that since the Islamic empire spread to Palestine in the seventh century until the present that Arabs inhabited and

cultivated the land prior to Jews immigrating to Palestine¹⁶³. In actuality, the Seljuk Turks took over from the Arabs in 1071 after 436 years of rule by the Arabs¹⁶⁴. From that time to the present, no Arabs ruled Palestine and by the 19th century, the land had become “a poor barren wasteland, barely hospitable to life”¹⁶⁵. As Jews immigrated to Palestine in the late 19th century and early 20th century, “Zionist pioneers began reclaiming swamp land, ridding the country of disease, and building cities” and “Palestinian-Arabs became attracted by the economic opportunities that had been created”¹⁶⁶. On the other hand, Jews “can document an unbroken presence in the land for 2,000 years”¹⁶⁷.

Arabs Grip on the Holy Places in Jerusalem

The Arabs hold claim to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem as Islam’s third holiest site, behind Mecca and Medina. The basis for this claim is Muhammad’s night journey¹⁶⁸. According to the Koran, while Muhammad was sleeping in Mecca, the angel Gabriel brought him a winged horse to take him from Mecca to al-Masjid al-Aqsa (“the Outer” or “Farther Mosque”)¹⁶⁹. The “Farther Mosque” has been interpreted by Muslims to be the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, although Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Koran and the Al-Aqsa Mosque situated on the Temple Mount was not yet built¹⁷⁰. Since the Temple Mount is ***the holiest*** site in Judaism, it is understandable that Jews want access to it and also to rebuild the Temple there. However, “the modern objection by Muslims to Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount is based on the Muslim contention that since Al-Quds (the Muslim name for Jerusalem) is a holy place for Muslims, they cannot accept rule by non-Muslims, which would amount to a betrayal of Islam”¹⁷¹.

The Arabs are exploiting the refugee problem that they caused on the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of the 1948 and 1967 wars. Since 1948, the problem has been made worse

by Arab states continuing to refuse refugee admission to their countries¹⁷². The PLO had gone so far as to encourage illegal immigration to the camps in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank¹⁷³. During a labor shortage in the 1970s, Saudi Arabia “rejected unemployed Palestinian refugees and instead hired South Koreans”¹⁷⁴. It is projected that by 2020, the Palestinian population will become the majority in Israel¹⁷⁵. The Arab plan to outnumber the Jews includes conducting terrorist attacks by targeting new immigrants in order for them to move to “leave for the United States”¹⁷⁶. Also, another critical point of the Palestinian issue is the right of return for the refugees. The Palestinians claim that the refugees have the “right to return” to their prewar homes in order for there to be peace¹⁷⁷. However, in U.N. Resolution 194 dated 11 December 1948, the wording does not require, but recommends, “that the refugees ‘should’ be ‘permitted’ to return and that the permission is subject to two conditions: the wish to return, and to live at peace with his neighbors”¹⁷⁸. U.N. Resolution 194, and other resolutions since that time, have called for compensation for property lost or given up by refugees¹⁷⁹. It should also be noted that the Jews who were expelled from Arab countries were not compensated and their land was confiscated. Israel absorbed all of those Jews who were expelled, but the Arab countries did not absorb the Palestinian Arab refugees¹⁸⁰.

The Arabs and Iranians engage in a combination of Holocaust denial and regretting that the Holocaust did not do even greater damage than it did. Ahmad Ragab of the Egyptian paper Al-Akhbar states in his column to “give thanks to Hitler, of blessed memory,” and that he regrets that Hitler did not murder every last Jew¹⁸¹. On the other hand, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad stated “they have fabricated a legend under the name Massacre of the Jews, and they hold it higher than God himself, religion itself and the prophets themselves”¹⁸².

Recommendations for National Strategy

In order to counter the threat to the United States, we must examine our strategy, then create proactive and reactive plans for information operations in order to boost public opinion for the U.S., and in the long run help gain recognition for the State of Israel by governments and the public. One of the key elements in the national strategy realm to winning the Global War on Terror, as briefed by RADM Sullivan in a lecture at Mississippi State University regarding the Military Strategy for the War on Terrorism, is to “support mainstream Muslim efforts to reject violent extremism”¹⁸³. The enabler for this element is “institutionalizing, domestically and internationally, the strategy against violent extremists”¹⁸⁴. The military strategy framework calls it “counter ideological support for terrorism” (CIST) and the objective is to “contribute to the establishment of conditions that counter ideological support for terrorism”¹⁸⁵. Countering the ideological support requires a knowledge and understanding of the Koran since the terrorists use the Koran as the basis of their rhetoric to maintain and recruit for their cause.

A proactive plan must include Islamic organizations with credibility in Muslim world, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab League. It is necessary that the United States formulate an agreement that institutionalizes a form of Islam that does not preach hate and does allow for the recognition of Israel. The Muslim nations need to bring this acceptable standardization of Islam to their countries and ensure that clerics comply with the organization in their sermons. This standardization would also have to be applied to the education system as well, since Muslim religion is integrated in education.

For a reaction plan, units that conduct information operations need to have a firm understanding of the Koran, Sunna, Hadiths, the history of Islam, Arab culture, and language training. While there has been increased awareness in the military for the need for culture and

language training, terrorists have been known to take verses from the Koran out of context. In order to counter this propaganda, the U.S. and the Muslim governments need to point out promptly to the public that the terrorists are using Islam to manipulate public opinion. Terrorists have also disseminated so-called expert information regarding Arab and Muslim history that revises facts of the past. This revisionist history is a form of propaganda that relies on the adage that was stated by the Nazi information operations expert, Goebbels, when he said that if a lie were repeated often enough and long enough, it would come to be perceived as truth¹⁸⁶. The facts need to be brought out quickly to counter the propaganda and, in order to do that, the information operations teams need to be knowledgeable and prepared for the common arguments in terrorist propaganda.

The U.S. needs to conduct information operations against the terrorists in a timely fashion using the terrorists' means of transmitting their message. Terrorist groups do not hide their desires; they freely post them on the internet. Hamas, the PLO, and Hezbollah are just a few of the organizations that post their covenants and organizational news on their websites¹⁸⁷. In order to counter their covenants and strategies, the U.S. needs to disseminate the truth about the issues involving Israel, i.e. their legal right to existing as a state, the Arab riots murdering Jews, the real story of the Holocaust, the cause of the refugee situation, controversy over the Temple Mount, etc. The way to disseminate the information would be to hack onto the terrorist websites to post the truth about the issues, influence newspaper articles in major Arab cities, and make liaison with Al-Jazeera to get the message out on their network, to name just a few methods. Since clerics influence public opinion in sermons at mosques, it would also behoove the U.S. to have human intelligence, at a minimum, monitoring the more radical clerics in order to promptly counter propaganda disseminated at religious services.

Public affairs and civil military operations need to be integrated into the plans. The U.S. would get a boost in public opinion by building mosques using joint U.S.-Muslim teams. Muslim unemployment rates are typically cited as enabling conditions for terrorist organizations. Using unemployed Muslims in construction of mosques would help us as well as projects similar to Habitat for Humanity. Using either unemployed or poorer Muslims to help build houses for their own people, with the help of Americans, would increase public opinion for the U.S. Disaster relief efforts, such as the tsunami in Indonesia and the earthquake in Pakistan within the last year, have also brought up public opinion substantially in those countries¹⁸⁸.

Alternative Courses of Action

If proactive and reactive information operations and public affairs plans do not help reduce terrorism in a reasonable amount of time, more drastic courses of action (COAs) may be required. COA 1 is Status Quo Modified, COA 2 is Population Transfer, and COA 3 is Total War.

COA 1, Status Quo Modified, closely relates to the road map for peace. The requirements are Israel and Palestine can live side by side, yet allow for appropriate levels of security. All Jews would continue vacating the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Israel continues to install security fence until completion. The State of Palestine is established on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Muslim countries recognize the State of Israel. As for the Holy Places, Arabs retain the Al-Aqsa Mosque exclusively, the Dome of the Rock transfers to U.N. control, the entire Temple Mount transfers to Israel (except the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque), and no new mosque building on, in, or under the Temple Mount.

COA 2, Population Transfer, would go into effect if a Palestinian State cannot live side by side with Israel, and the status quo is no longer acceptable. Using COA 2 may lead to

circumstances that require COA 3. For COA 2, the Palestinian Arab population is transferred from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The U.S. would coordinate with Jordan (known as East Palestine in 1920) to accept as many Palestinians as possible. In order to facilitate this, a grand mosque is built for the Palestinians that would be a gift from the countries that benefit from the Palestinian conflict ending. An elaborate city is built around the mosque, specifically for the Palestinians. The location of the mosque and city is chosen to give some separation from the Jordanian cities, but relatively close to Jerusalem in order to allow reasonable transportation times to visit the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Using COA 2, Israel is allowed to secure its new borders (Israel, West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights) using whatever means necessary as long as they allow Palestinians to visit Jerusalem. The Muslim countries would also need to recognize Israel. The same stipulations for the Holy Places in COA 1 would apply to COA 2 also.

COA 3, Total War, would be either a result of the status quo or alternative COAs developing into a situation that requires a fight for the very existence of the United States. In this fight, Israel would likely be in the same fight, based on terrorist ideology associating the United States with Israel. The desired end state following COA 3 would be that all nations renounce terrorism, including so called “freedom fighters” conducting jihad in the name of Allah, complete recognition of Israel, and Muslims must give up ALL rights to the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque. For all three COAs, information operations and public affairs not only would be integral in the successful conduct of the campaigns, but would be vital to ensuring a lasting peace since the terrorist ideology must be defeated in order to prevent insurgencies or future conflicts.

Conclusion

The Arab-Israeli Conflict continues to heat up during the Global War on Terrorism. While the historical discussion is lengthy, it is required due to the complex situation that the Arab-Israeli Conflict has developed into. Both parties continue to use ancient history as well as recent history to justify their claims to the land. Along with the Palestinian claims to the land, they used extensive propaganda to promote unrest through their Mufti al-Husseini. The campaign of terror that he led cost many lives on both sides and allowed a deep hatred to grow between two sides that previously were able to work with each other following World War I.

The conflict has lasting issues that could not be solved during the last sixty years. Between the land, the refugees, and the Holy Places, much is at stake, but the solution has evaded not only the Israelis and the Palestinians, but other countries, including the United States, that have tried to help bring an end to the conflict. However, many countries among the Muslim world do not like the U.S. giving aid to Israel. Those Muslim countries and their citizens have become hostile to America. Osama bin Laden is one individual who was able to organize Al-Qaeda and conduct an attack against the United States, killing many innocent people without remorse. This has caused the U.S. to rethink about national security.

The Global War on Terrorism is being fought by bin Laden on the television screens and on the internet. His ideology is effective in recruiting jihadists for his cause. This battle for the hearts and minds, Muslim, American and international, is being fought daily. The U.S. public affairs and information operations teams are at the tip of the information spear and their performance is crucial to winning the hearts and minds. With planning and perseverance, the U.S. will prevail.

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