

The Case Against a Palestinian State: Part 1 - An Unjust Cause

written by Dr. Raphael BenLevi | 20.01.2025

For decades now, common wisdom has been that the only solution to the hundred-year conflict between Israel and its neighbors is to establish an independent Arab-Palestinian state alongside Israel. So engrained has this thinking become that many have been unable to fathom an alternative response to the Palestinian Hamas massacre of October 7th than to double down on promoting such a state.

However, even those who strongly oppose the idea that the result of such horrendous behavior should be an award of independence, have mainly couched their opposition in terms of the timing and not necessarily the essence of the matter. Though the 'a state now would be a prize for terror' argument is correct and in a saner world perhaps suffice to put the issue to rest for the foreseeable future, it does not address the real issue at hand. In fact, the October 7th massacre is only the most recent and grave symptom of the abject failure of the Palestinian national movement to demonstrate that it is capable and deserving of an independent state.

With the re-inauguration of President Donald Trump, there is a historic opportunity to move beyond the tried and failed policies of previous administrations, Republican and Democrat alike. We must recognize the truth, that the idea of a State of Palestine is one of the most unjust initiatives of the latter half of the 20th century and if ever established would constitute a geopolitical disaster of the highest order; for Israel, for moderate Arab States in the region, and for the United States. Any moral and straight-thinking person should abandon it and start considering alternative arrangements for self-rule for Palestinians, conditioned on civilized behavior and demand an end to the idea of perpetual Palestinian refugeedom. Here's why.

An Unjust Cause

In theory, the idea of two states for two peoples makes perfect sense. The Jews are the indigenous people of the land, the only people existing today whose language, culture and religion developed in this land and who had an independent

national existence on it for hundreds of years. Arab-speaking peoples are truly indigenous only to the Arabian Peninsula and their presence in the Levant is a result of Islamic Arab imperialism of the past millennia.

On the other hand, one can fairly ask is there no expiry date to the Jewish claim to ownership of the land? And at some point, shouldn't the descendants of the Arabs who conquered and occupied the land attain the rights to remain there? Can't the two communities find a way to live alongside one another in mutual respect and cooperation?

However, the unjustness of the Palestinian cause today is not the product of theory, but rather of events and decisions that have been made by this movement since its inception. It comes down to the question of agency. Do the Palestinians carry responsibility for their actions and decisions over the past century or not? Justice means granting a party its just desserts; it is inextricably connected to choices and actions; ignoring the consequences of a party's actions cannot serve justice. The problem with the Palestinian national movement today is that whatever the justness of its claim to political independence was a century ago, its actions since then have made it the national movement least deserving of an independent state in the world today.

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