

May 10, 2011.

The Editor,

The Chronicle Herald.

Dear Editor,

Paul Schneidereit [May 10] is again indulging in the re-writing of the history of the Palestine/Israel conflict. He states that "Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Jordan, which rejected the UN Partition Plan for Palestine setting up two states — one for Jews and one for Palestinians — attacked the new country." The Arabs rejected the UN partition plan because it was completely unjust. On Nov. 29, 1947, when the resolution was bulldozed through by US pressure, the Jews in Palestine, mostly recent and illegal immigrants, constituted 31% of the population and owned 5.6% of the land in Palestine. Yet, this resolution apportioned 56% of the land for a Jewish state, and only 42% of the land for the Muslim and Christian Palestinian Arabs. The Arabs were asking for a binational secular state, as did Martin Buber and Albert Einstein amongst others. Furthermore, the leaders of the Zionist movement at the time, Menachem Begin and Ben Gurion, had no intention of accepting that permanently. Menachem Begin, leader of the Herut party, stated in relation to the partition scheme: "The partition of the homeland is illegal. It will never be recognised". David Ben Gurion, when announcing the creation of Israel on May 14, 1948, refused to define its borders stating: "We are announcing the creation of a state in the western part of our country.....We are not obliged to state the limits of our state". He later wrote in his diaries {edited by Michael Bar-Zohar and published in 1954}, after Israel had conquered 78% of the land of Palestine: "To maintain the status quo will not do. We have set up a dynamic state bent upon expansion".

As to Schneidereit's statement that the Arab armies attacked Israel a day after its creation on May 14, 1948, the facts are that **before** a single Arab soldier entered Palestine on May 15, 1948, over 300,000 Palestinian refugees were driven out or fled in terror, as a result of the numerous massacres committed against them. As well, many cities, e.g. Jaffa and Acre, and towns allotted to the Arab state, in that UN Partition scheme, were already occupied by the Jewish forces. Besides that, the statements by Yigal Allon, Ben Gurion and others that had these Arab armies, meagre as they were, not intervened, the borders of Israeli occupied territory would have gone far beyond the 78% of Palestine that they did conquer.

Paul Schneidereit speaks of the "building of settlements in disputed territories." This is the height of audacity. The territories where settlements are being created in the West Bank are illegally-occupied Palestinian territories, as affirmed by international law and repeated UN Security Council resolutions. There is nothing disputed about this land except in the minds of Schneidereit and Israel's apologists.

He accuses Hamas of being a terrorist organisation. As to terrorism, Israeli state terrorism exceeds in its magnitude and frequency any acts committed by Hamas. The facts are that Hamas and Israel came to a six month ceasefire agreement in June 2008, and it was Israel that violated that agreement, on Nov. 4, 2008, attacking Gaza and killing 6 of its citizens.

For any fair-minded person, the failure of any peace process in this area is directly related to Israeli continuing its illegal occupation of Palestinian land and its defiance of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention. These violations are defined by international law as war crimes, and must be brought to an end, if there is to be peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians.

Yours sincerely,

Ismail Zayid, MD.