

# War on Terrorism or Illegal Occupation?

**The U.S. has given \$14 million a day to Israel for 25 years.**

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More than 1,600 people—at least 1,287 Palestinians and 351 Israelis—have been killed in the 18 months since the second *intifada* (uprising) began against Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza.

The death toll is mounting daily as Israel's powerful military has launched a major new offensive. Justifying the invasion, Israeli Internal Security Minister Uzi Landau declared "We're not facing human beings, but rather beasts."

Even before this latest escalation, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan called for an end to Palestinian suicide bombings, and condemned Israel for conducting "an all-out conventional war on Palestinian civilians."

Annan told Israel's leaders: "You must end the illegal occupation. More urgently, you must stop the bombing of civilian areas, the assassinations, the unnecessary use of lethal force, the demolitions and the daily humiliation of ordinary Palestinians."

## U.S. BACKS OCCUPATION

The current carnage stems directly from Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land and its dispossession of the Palestinian people. Washington's support of Israel's daily violation of Palestinian rights and international law is a central cause of the intense anger at U.S. foreign policy that exists throughout the Middle East and South Asia. This anger is the soil in which terrorism grows.



The Bush administration has given the green light to Israel's escalation as part of his global "war on terrorism" and the U.S. bid to dominate the Middle East. The U.S. finances the occupation of Palestine by Israel's ultra-modern military. Every year for the past 25 years, the U.S. government has provided Israel with approximately \$2 billion in military aid and more than \$3 billion in economic assistance, loan guarantees and indirect funding. (See box.)

Israel uses U.S. aid to destroy the Palestinian economy and its social infrastructure, making even ordinary life miserable. Palestinian unemployment has soared to 70 percent.

Most of the recent killing and destruction has taken place in the West Bank and Gaza, territories conquered (along with East Jerusalem) by Israel in the 1967 war. U.N. Resolution 242—which the U.S. voted for—holds that continued occupation of these territories is illegal. That Resolution proclaims the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war."

But Israel refuses to end its occupation. Instead, since 1967, it has built

more than 150 settlements, populated by almost 400,000 Jews, on Palestinian land. These settlements are strategically located military outposts connected by four-lane highways that slice up the West Bank.

This pattern of Palestinian dispossession goes back to Israel's founding and even before. (See "A People Displaced.") During the first Israeli-Arab war in 1948, 750,000 Palestinians were driven or frightened from their centuries-old homes and lands. Though U.N. Resolution 194, passed in 1948, orders that these refugees be allowed to return to their homes, Israel has refused to comply for the last 53 years. Despite voting for this Resolution, the U.S. provides the money and political muscle that allows Israel's refusal to stand.

Is there a way to stop the deadly cycle of Israeli invasion and Palestinian suicide bombing? Marwan Barghouti, a top official in Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, wrote in the Washington Post on January 16: "For six years I languished as a political prisoner in an Israeli jail, where I

*continued*



# A People Dispossessed



**1900:** The population of historical Palestine—what is now Israel, the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem—is 550,000 Palestinian Arabs and 50,000 Jews.

**1946:** Due mainly to settlers from Europe, site of the Holocaust, the Jewish population grows more than tenfold to 608,000. The Palestinian population stands at 1,269,000. Jews own only six to eight percent of the country's land.

**1948:** Israel declares independence and conquers 78 percent of Palestine in a victorious war against its neighbors. Driving 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and confiscating most of their land reduce the Palestinian population within Israel's borders to 156,000. The Jewish population expands to 716,700. An additional 750,000 Palestinians live in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, while many uprooted Palestinian refugees flee to neighboring Arab countries.

**1967:** Israel initiates war against its neighbors and occupies the remaining 22 percent of Palestine, bringing another 1.1 million Palestinians directly under Israeli military rule.

**2002:** Israel's Jewish population is approximately 5.2 million. Approximately 1.3 million non-Jews, overwhelmingly Palestinians, also live within Israel's borders and face legalized discrimination. Another two million Palestinians live in the territories conquered by Israel in the 1967 war—the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. In 1967 less than 10,000 Jews lived in these occupied territories, but now close to 400,000 Jews have seized close to 10 percent of the land.

—ME/HK

(Sources: "Palestine's Population During the Ottoman and the British Mandate Periods," by Justin McCarthy, [www.mideastweb.org/PalPop.htm](http://www.mideastweb.org/PalPop.htm), [www.fmep.org/reports/](http://www.fmep.org/reports/) and Norman G. Finkelstein, "Image and Reality of the Palestine Conflict" 2001, pp.186-187.)

## U.S. Funds Israeli Occupation

Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. financial aid in the world, receiving a staggering \$14 million per day for the last 25 years.

Direct U.S. aid to Israel routinely has amounted to around \$3 billion each year (usually 60 percent military and 40 percent economic) for the last quarter century. Israel usually gets another two to three billion dollars in indirect U.S. aid, such as loan guarantees and special grants. These funds have subsidized Israel's huge military and its use of the most modern military equipment against the Palestinians and other Arabs.

Between 1949 and 2001 the U.S. gave Israel more than \$94 billion, according to the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. This is more than the U.S. gave to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean combined. These countries have a total population of over one billion mostly poor people. Israel has only six million people and one of the highest per capita incomes in the world.

—ME/HK

(Sources: [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org) and [www.sustaincam-paign.org](http://www.sustaincam-paign.org).)

### War on Terrorism...

was tortured, where I hung blindfolded as an Israeli beat my genitals with a stick. But since 1994, when I believed Israel was serious about ending its occupation, I have been a tireless advocate of peace...I still seek peaceful coexistence between the equal and

independent countries of Israel and Palestine based on full withdrawal from Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 and a just resolution to the plight of Palestinian refugees pursuant to U.N. resolutions. I do not seek to destroy Israel but only to end its occupation of my country."

This information sheet is reprinted from **War Times**, a free national newspaper opposed to Bush's wars at home and abroad. Contact War Times at [www.war-times.org](http://www.war-times.org) or email us at [wartimes@attbi.com](mailto:wartimes@attbi.com).