

History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict Through Maps

1. Represents Ottoman Greater Syria in 1910. Notice that the *vilayets* of Aleppo, Beirut, and Damascus do not correspond to any current nation states. Lebanon and Jerusalem are special types of administrative districts.
 2. Represents the potential division of spoils following WWI. Russia pulls out of the war in 1917 and makes public these secret plans which are in conflict with promises made to the Sharif Husayn of Mecca, who was supposed to receive an Arab Kingdom including the Hejaz, Greater Syria (minus coastline from ~Aleppo-Damascus), and Mesopotamia. This plan also conflicts with the Balfour Declaration which calls for a Jewish national home in Palestine.
 3. Represents the journeys of T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia) who helped Husayn's son Feisal wage the Arab revolt. Note that the British keep Arab troops away from Jerusalem.
 4. Representatives from the World Zionist Organization are allowed to attend Versailles Peace conference in 1919, and here is their proposed map, which is larger than greater Israel today.
 5. The Middle Eastern theatre of war was not considered vital or essential and talks about the future of these territories were tabled until the San Remo conference of 1920. This map differs from #2 in that it reflects Russia's withdrawal, and Britain obtaining Mosul (N. Iraq) in return for the French having direct administration over all their territories.
 6. In response to a Palestinian general strike and rebellion in 1936, the British sent the Peel commission to study the problem. The commission stated that the best possible solution was partition, suggesting this model. The Palestinians rejected it outright, and the Zionists saw it as an historic opportunity, although they did not agree with it.
 7. A US-British team came up with this plan that pleased neither side.
 8. Represents the plan hatched by the Jewish Agency, after which the British decide that they will pass the matter off to the UN.
 9. Land ownership based upon the findings of the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP).
 - 10a. UN partition plan, which allotted the new Jewish state three times as much land as the Peel plan. Also demonstrates where neighboring states entered. There was no unified Arab command, and there was a great deal of rivalry and factionalism among the Arab states. Transjordan received the W Bank and became Jordan, and Egypt became responsible for administering the Gaza Strip.
 - 10b. Represents gains on the partition plan made by Israel. It should be noted that even prior to invasion by the Arab states, Israel had plans to expand beyond the UN borders. 400-450,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled. Of 860,000 Palestinians who had lived in the area now called Israel, only 133,000 remained. Most go to camps in W Bank or Gaza, also camps in Lebanon. Smaller numbers relocate in other Arab states.
 11. Israel invaded Egypt in late Oct. 1956 to combat the long term problems of blockage of Israeli shipping and raids from the Egyptian controlled Gaza Strip, and the newer problem on Nasser's newly acquired Czech arms (\$336 million). Israel acted in collusion with Britain and France.
 12. Represents another aspect of the crisis—diversion of water resources. Many of the first Palestinian planned and executed raids were on water projects (1960s).
 13. As a result of a preemptive strike on its neighbors, Israel conquers the Sinai, Gaza, W Bank, and Golan Heights. Israel begins a project to “create facts” on the new territory—building settlements. Settlers include deeply religious Jews who feel that these territories are part of their traditional homeland, newly settled Afro-Asian Jews, and people who want better accommodations for the money.
 14. 1973 October war waged by Egypt and Syria against Israel. Initially successful, but US dispatches major airlift to help Israel.
 15. Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which occurred during the height of the Lebanese Civil War. The PLO formed a state within a state in Lebanon. Israeli troops remain in S Lebanon until 1999. Recently some troops have returned to position on the border.
- Maps 16, 17, and 18 demonstrate location and growth of settlements. Note the rapid expansion of settlements between 1977 and 1987.

In looking at all of these maps, remember that Israel is about the same size as the state of Massachusetts, and at its narrowest point is only 8 miles across.