

Name: _____

Middle East DBQ

Historical Context: In 1947, the United Nations drew up a plan dividing Palestine into two states, Jewish and Arab, which the Arabs rejected. The next year, Israel was established as an independent nation according to the United Nations guidelines. As a result of the 1967 war, Israel gained control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Gaza was unilaterally given to the Palestinians in 2005. Palestinians still do not have an independent state of their own. Despite ongoing conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, many on both sides still hope for peace.

TASK: Analyze the causes of the Arab - Israeli Conflict

- Identify the opposing groups in the region and their interests
- Describe specific reasons for conflict
- Give details and examples to support your points

Document 1 - The Balfour Declaration: November 2, 1917

During the First World War, British policy became gradually committed to the idea of establishing a Jewish home in Palestine (Eretz Yisrael). After discussions in the British Cabinet, and consultation with Zionist leaders, the decision was made known in the form of a letter by Arthur James Lord Balfour to Lord Rothschild. The letter represents the first political recognition of Zionist aims by a Great Power.

Foreign Office

November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur James Balfour

1) Why did Arthur James Balfour write this letter to Lord Rothschild?

2) What groups may feel prejudiced by this Declaration?

Document 2 - From "The Zionist Case" by Golda Meir (speech given March 25, 1946)

"As I have said, we came to Palestine to do away with the helplessness of the Jewish people through our own endeavors. Therefore, you will realize what it meant for us to watch from here millions of Jews being slaughtered during these years of war...We Jews only want that which is given naturally to all peoples of the world to be masters of our own fate...We are certain that given an opportunity of bringing in large masses of Jews into this country, of opening the doors of Palestine to all Jews who wish to come here, we can...create a free Jewish society built on the basis of cooperation, equality and mutual aid."

1) Why did the Jews come to Palestine? _____

2) What is it that the Jews want? _____

Document 3 - From "Children of a Tenth-Class God?" by Nihaya Qawasmi

"Late at night when everything is quiet I think about how I will ever forgive the Israelis for what they did to me. I don't mean stealing my homeland, killing my people, turning me into a refugee, or depriving me from having a Palestinian state. I'm talking about myself – what they did to my personality.

I wish I had a normal life: no tension, no rage, no hatred, no hard feelings toward anybody. Even if they leave my country and give me back my rights, how will I overcome these feelings inside me?"

1) What do the Palestinians blame the Jews for doing to them? _____

Document 4: Statement by President Nasser to Members of the Egyptian National Assembly, 29 May 1967:

Then came the events of 1956 - the Suez battle. We all know what happened in 1956. When we rose to demand our rights, Britain, France and Israel opposed us, and we were faced with the tripartite aggression. We resisted, however, and proclaimed that we would fight to the last drop of our blood. God gave us success and God's victory was great...

...Preparations have already been made. We are now ready to confront Israel. They have claimed many things about the 1956 Suez war, but no one believed them after the secrets of the 1956 collusion were uncovered - that mean collusion in which Israel took part. Now we are ready for the confrontation. We are now ready to deal with the entire Palestine question.

The issue now at hand is not the Gulf of Aqaba, the Straits of Tiran, or the withdrawal of the UNEF, but the rights of the Palestine people. It is the aggression which took place in Palestine in 1948 with the collaboration of Britain and the United States. It is the expulsion of the Arabs from Palestine, the usurpation of their rights, and the plunder of their property. It is the disavowal of all the UN resolutions in favour of the Palestinian people...

1) What was the result of the 1956 Suez Battle? _____

2) What do the Egyptians argue is the issue at hand in 1967? _____

Document 5: Excerpts from the Hamas Charter

"After Palestine, the Zionists aspire to expand from the Nile to the Euphrates. When they will have digested the region they overtook, they will aspire to further expansion, and so on. Their plan is embodied in the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion", and their present conduct is the best proof of what we are saying."

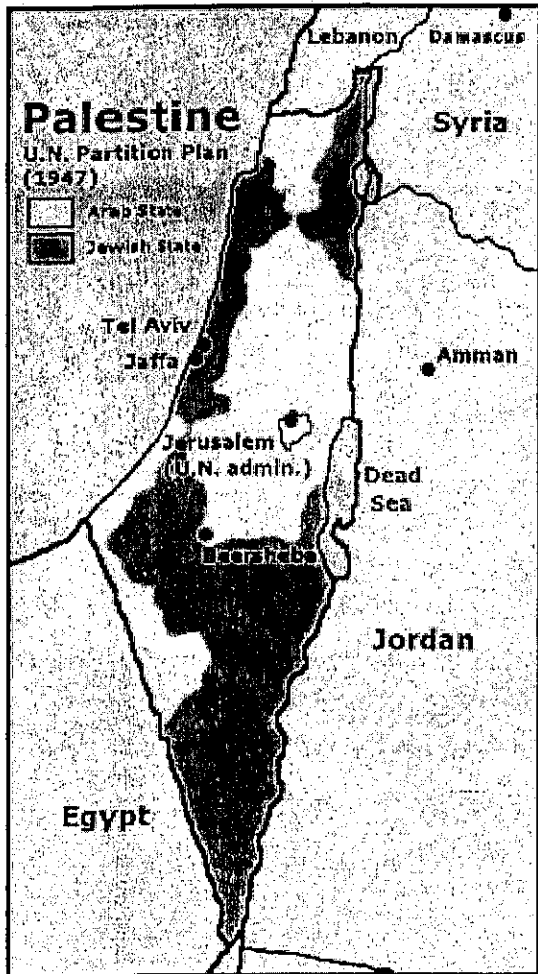
"Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it." (The Martyr, Imam Hassan al-Banna, of blessed memory).

"The Islamic Resistance Movement believes that the land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgement Day. It, or any part of it, should not be squandered: it, or any part of it, should not be given up. "

1) What does Hamas believe the Zionists aspire to do? _____

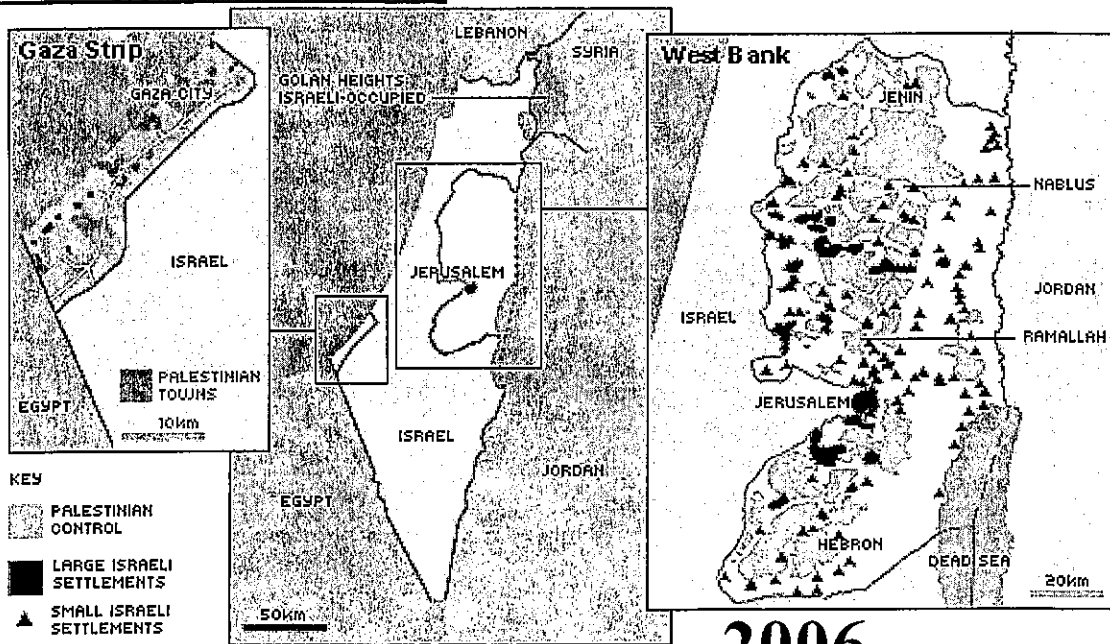
2) According to Hamas, what will need to happen to stop Israeli expansion? _____

1947



Document 6: Maps of Palestine

1) What changed in the land of Palestine from 1947 to 2006?



2006