



What Those Who Accept The 'Stolen Land' Myth Don't Understand

Woke culture demands ritual acknowledgements about Native Americans. Those who think this should also apply to Palestinians don't understand Jews are indigenous in Israel.

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By [Jonathan S Tobin](#)





Contrary to intersectional myths, Zionism is not an expression of colonialism or imperialism. Far from being the "apartheid state" that leftists claim, it remains the sole democracy in the region. Pictured are Gen. Moshe Dayan, Prime Minister Moshe Sharett, President Chaim Weizmann and Defense Minister David Ben-Gurion, observing the armed forces parade on Israel Independence Day in 1955. (Photo: Israel Office of Information)



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(JNS) One of the tragicomic if all too prevalent customs of contemporary woke corporate culture is the way many groups and corporations now open meetings with ritual acknowledgments that they are on "stolen land." It involves the convener of the gathering to begin any proceedings by first stating that those speaking are "on the lands" of whatever Native American tribe once lived there as the indigenous inhabitants of the North American continent.

That is part of the context of the claim that the State of Israel was built on "stolen land," a phrase that was used by Hussain *Altamimi*, one of New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's staffers when he [smeared it](#) as a "racist-European ethno-state." Unsurprisingly, *Altamimi* didn't lose his job when this came out. Why would AOC fire someone who reflects the same hatred of the Jewish state that she and other "Squad" colleagues have often expressed?

This is a commonplace myth spread by those who believe in intersectional ideology, which deems the efforts of all oppressed "people of color" to resist the racist oppression of those possessing "white privilege" to be part of one great righteous struggle.

Part of the problem with this facile and toxic idea is that whatever you think the answer to the question about the identity of the rightful owners of the North American continent might be, the notion that Jews are merely "European" and not indigenous to the Middle East or the land of Israel is a lie.

Unfortunately, individuals who accept and spread that lie are not confined to those who work in the offices of radical members of Congress, even if their bosses are one of the young rock stars of the Democratic Party who are planning on taking it over once the current octogenarian leadership departs. These myths are widely accepted throughout academia and the mainstream media.

They are reflected in the coverage of Israel in which, as one [recent article](#) in *The New York Times* about a Jerusalem property dispute put it, the Jews were accused of trying to "Judaize" their own ancient capital.

That specific controversy involves a Palestinian family that was living on land they didn't own in a Jerusalem neighborhood Jews lived in before they were thrown out in 1948 by Jordanian invaders. Other properties in the area are claimed by those who represent the original Jewish owners, but this one involves state land that will now be used to build a school for Arab children with special needs. Indeed, some Palestinians believe that the family [evicted by Israel](#) stole it from them.

Yet that didn't prevent the [Biden administration](#) from condemning Israel in this instance. Nor did the facts stop officials from trying to exert pressure on Israel to allow Palestinian squatters to remain on land owned by Jews. The notion that Jewish rights in Jerusalem can be negated by the intransigence of Arabs who don't accept the legitimacy of the Jewish presence anywhere in the country is something even those liberals who claim to support Israel are ready to accept.

Regardless of the theoretical benefits of a two-state solution that Palestinians have repeatedly rejected or about the wisdom of enforcing Jewish property rights in areas of Jerusalem, the Jews aren't "stealing" land in Jerusalem. Nor are they invaders in a country in which they have lived for three millennia and from which they will never again allow themselves to be expelled.

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With respect to North America, it's true that the Native American tribes that lived on the continent were dispossessed by the Europeans who began arriving there 500 years ago. This process involved larcenous sales of land in which tribe members often had no idea what this meant, in addition to treaty infringements and outright theft, generally accompanied by military aggression and slaughter. What traditional American histories called the "winning" of the continent involved tragedy for the Native American losers.

But few of those now signaling their virtue by paying homage to indigenous tribes who once lived on such "stolen land" are planning on giving their property and homes to their descendants, if any can be found. Indeed, even recognized Native American tribes, some of which are actually interested in getting back some of the places where their ancestors once lived or roamed, have noted the emptiness of these woke pronouncements.

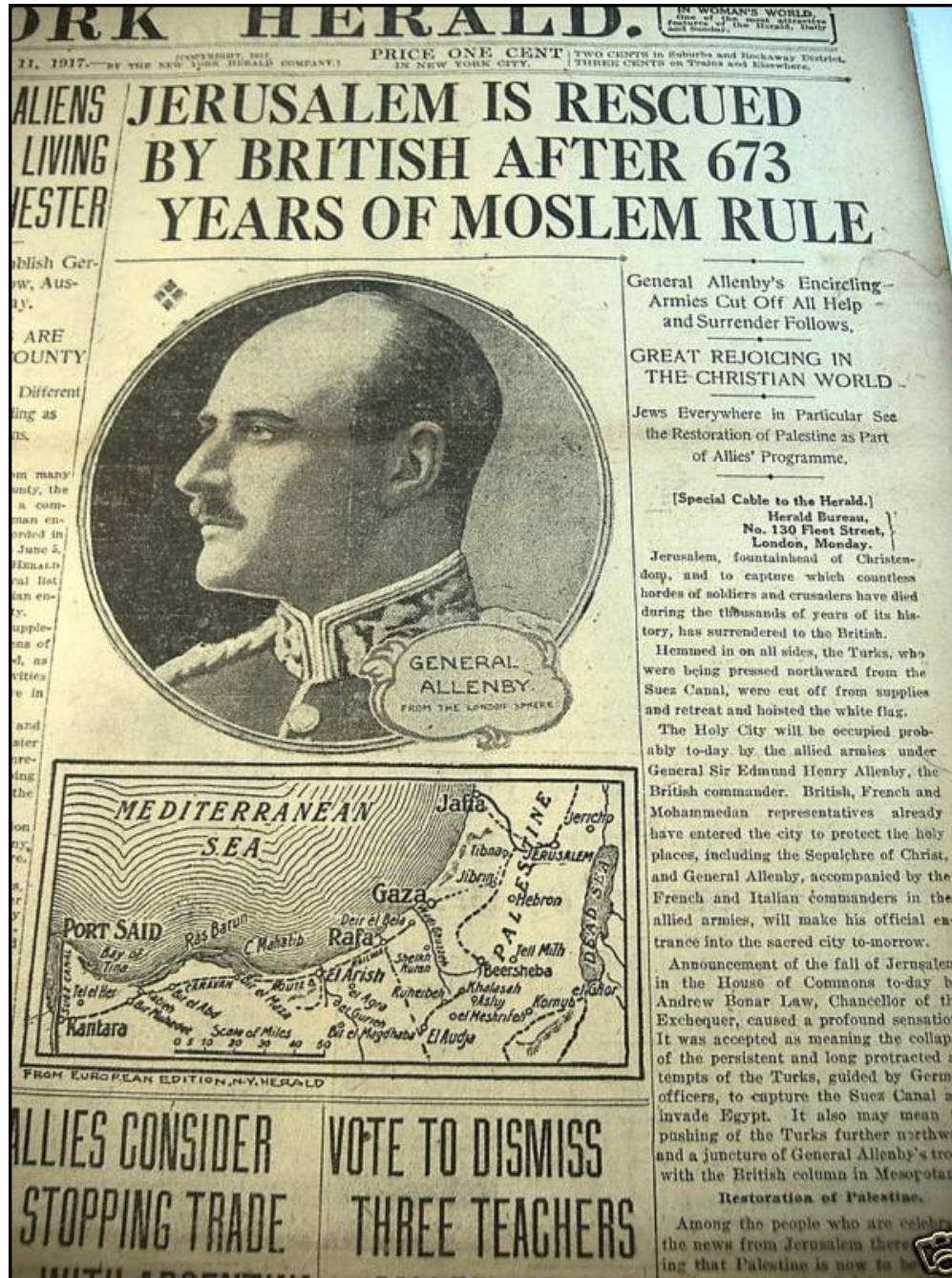
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claim were once sacred to other tribes who were defeated, dispossessed and slaughtered, much in the same manner that white Europeans would ultimately do to them.

The notion that this process of dispossession was immoral rather than merely the way groups of human beings had always interacted with each other since time immemorial—with the strong subjugating the weak—was a modern invention that didn't become widely accepted until the late 20th century. That change in thinking, of course, is a good thing, even if the retrospective pronouncements that some who did it were evil while others were not is both anachronistic and lacking in both context and historical background.

After all, the idea that the world would have been a better place had Europeans never arrived in America—and that the republic that would help rid the world of Nazism and defeat Soviet Communism should not have been created—is absurd as well as ahistorical.



The headlines made clear that Jerusalem was rescued - not "stolen" - from the Ottomans or anyone else, when the British regained the capital of the Jewish homeland in 1917. This victory led to the shaky path towards statehood. (Photo: File)

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Yet even those who are willing to support the proposition that all descendants of immigrants from Europe or elsewhere should divest themselves of stolen Native American property need to realize a key fact about the Middle East: Jews—whether their families came from Europe or are part of the majority of Jewish Israelis who trace their roots to the Middle East or North Africa—are indigenous to the land of Israel.

Contrary to intersectional myths, Zionism is not an expression of colonialism or imperialism. It is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. Far from being the “apartheid state” that leftists claim, it remains the sole democracy in the region.

Absorbing these concepts is difficult for those who have been indoctrinated in woke doctrines that define Jews as both white and privileged, and therefore, to be disparaged and fought. Just as important, they must also understand that their acceptance of these lies enables anti-Semitism and rationalizes violence – whether from Palestinian terrorists like Hamas and Hezbollah, or those who attack American synagogues.

Far from being a harmless woke myth, the fallacy about Jews stealing land doesn't merely enable slander; it is the foundation on which most forms of antisemitic hate, delegitimization and terrorism rest.



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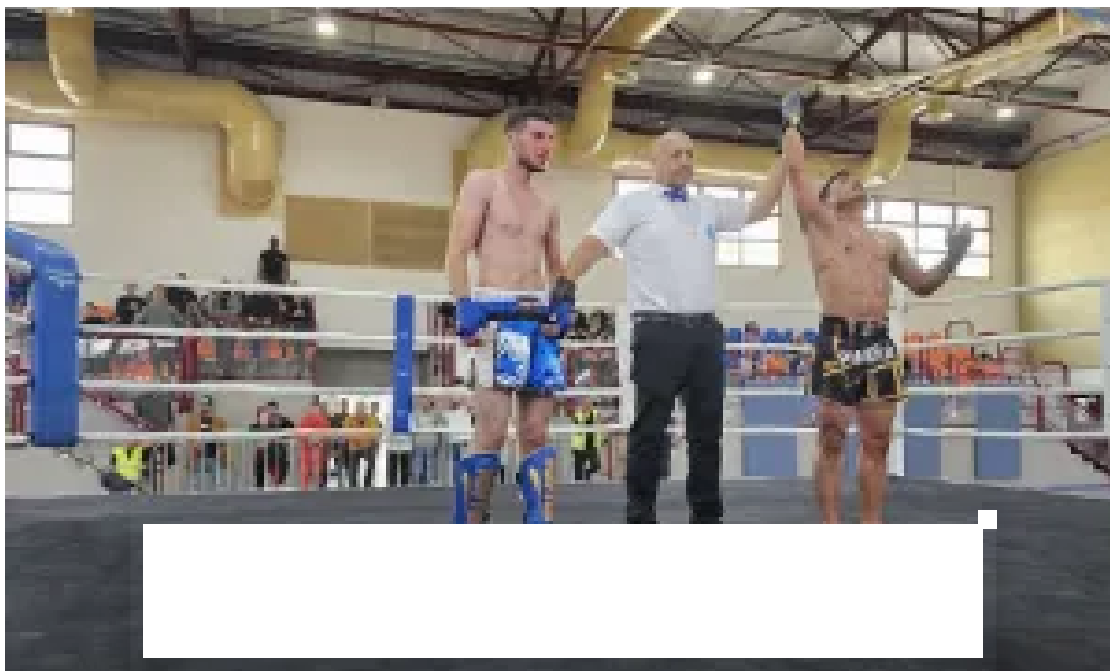
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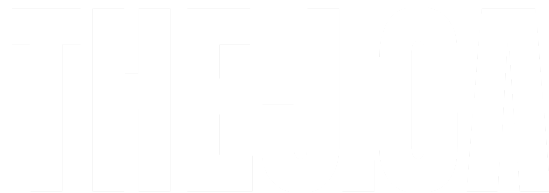


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