

Armistice agreements of 1948-1949, Israel was in control of 77.4 percent of arable land and exceeded 80 percent by 1950; it was estimated that more than 770,000 Palestinians became refugees.⁵⁸ This massive separation of Palestinian producers from their means of subsistence in response to the Zionist conquest of land was thus conducted not through the "gentle and careful models" prescribed by Herzl, but rather through violent expulsion, resulting in the refugee camps persisting as "native labor reserves", doomed to be unproductive, and marginalized as "surplus" population. This is precisely in contrast with white settler-colonialism in Africa, where the expulsion of African producers from their subsistence forms of life, and the consolidation of the "native labor reserves" was precisely to create a system of forced labor;⁵⁹ but Zionism then needed only Arab land, but not Arab labor.

The physical displacement of Palestinians and their transfer across the borders in the aftermath of the 1948 War was not an accident; neither was the war itself. It was proposed and discussed by leaders of the Zionist movement already in 1940. Joseph Weitz* commented in September, 1967, that twenty-seven years ago he had written the following in his diary:

"Among ourselves it must be clear that there is no place in the country for both peoples together....With the Arabs, we shall not achieve our aim of being independent people in this country. The only solution is Eretz-Israel, at least the west part of Eretz-Israel without Arabs...and there is no other way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries, transfer all of them, not one village or tribe shall remain, and the transfer must aim at Iraq, Syria, and even Transjordan. For this purpose, money will be found, much money; and only with this transfer could the country absorb millions of our brothers. There is no alternative...." 60

* Joseph Weitz was Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jewish National Fund (1951-1973), Head of Plant and Afforestation Department of the JNF (1918-1932), Director of the Land Development Division of JNF (1932-1959), Chairman of the Israel Land Development Authority.