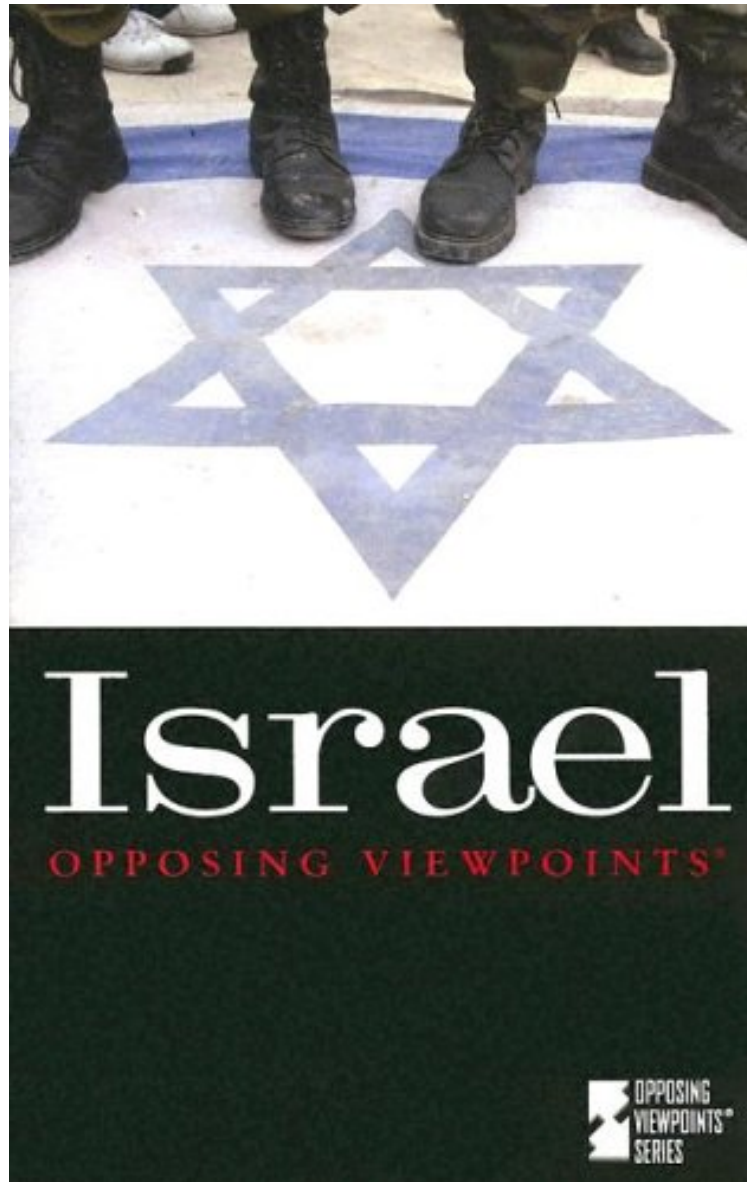


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Israel (Opposing Viewpoints)

John Woodward

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John Woodward : Israel (Opposing Viewpoints) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Israel (Opposing Viewpoints):

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Terrific variety of viewpoints on IsraelBy Jill MalterIn 1989, the Greenhaven Press produced an excellent "Opposing Viewpoints" volume on Israel. There were articles on the need (or lack of need) for Israel, whether Israel treated Arabs fairly, whether the United States ought to support Israel, and on

Israel's international role and future. Now, in 2005, the Greenhaven Press has come up with a new (albeit noticeably shorter) book on Israel. It continues in the same fine tradition. There are all sorts of viewpoints here! The book starts with a couple of articles on Israel's right to exist. However, nations do exist, and for reasons. I think it is silly to say a nation has a right to exist, and even more absurd to say that a nation has no such right. In any case, Yaron Brook and Peter Schwartz make the point that the Arabs who want a new Levantine state do not want freedom but the right to attack Jews. If America appeases such demands, it will make matters worse. Meanwhile, Ahron Cohen says that Zionism annoys Muslims and must therefore be abandoned, with Jews returning to their prior relationship to Muslims (dhimmihood). Those of us who support human rights are unlikely to be convinced. Given that nations have features that differentiate them, it is easy to argue that Israel ought to be Jewish. And the Kinneret agreement does just that. But Joel Kovel argues that such an Israel would fight for Jewish exceptionalism! In fact, getting rid of Israel's Jewish nature would make Judaism truly exceptional, and result in a special lack of rights just for Jews. Tony Judt argues that Israel was formed only in 1948, and that is too late! That's preposterous. He calls Israel (but not any other state) a "dysfunctional anachronism." But that is simply an attack on human rights by Judt, as Jonathan Rosenblum points out. After all, the Arab nationalism that opposes Israel is far more virulent and exclusivist. I agree. The threats to human rights that made Israel a necessity in the first place are still present. James Inhofe argues that Israel rightfully belongs to the Jews. I think a more convincing case can be made, but he raises some good points. The Arab counterargument is astonishing. It simply greedily demands everything. There is no recognition that other people live on this planet too. Nevertheless, Paul Eisen's article probably has the most misinformation. It rhetorically asks if Israel's ethnicity is the major obstacle to a just peace. Well, no, it isn't. The major obstacle to a just peace is the refusal to abide Israel's insistence on everyone, even Jews, being granted human rights. Barry Block makes this point more strongly, explaining that Zionism is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. "Liberating and saving the life of one's own people is not racism." Jonathan Rosenblum argues that no Levantine Arab is above suspicion in the present war. After all, women and kids are sometimes suicide bombers. But this raises more questions than it answers. Obviously, some Arabs want to be law-abiding, and a way needs to be found to distinguish them from those who want to engage in violence against Jews. Patrick Johnston's article argues that Israel is a terrorist state, that Zionists (such as myself) must be declared terrorists, that there must be war crimes tribunals against Israeli leaders, and that the UN must impose harsh sanctions against Israel. But everything he says against Israel and Zionism can be applied to anyone. I think one could use the same argument to justify getting rid of all humans. Ziad Asali argues that peace between Israel and the Levantine Arabs is possible, but only on Arab terms. Basically, those terms seem to be "what is mine is mine, what is yours I'll take most of, and the rest we'll share until I want that too." That's not peace. David Horowitz correctly argues that peace with the Levantine Arabs is not possible because their only real demand is for the destruction of Israel. Peace will have to entail that demand being thwarted or dropped. Don Feder agrees: the advertised "two-state" solution will not bring peace. But a George Bush speech is included which indeed advertises just this solution. Uzi Landau argues in favor of the security fence between Israel and the Arabs. But he also argues that Arabs must continue to be allowed to live in Israel, and that by symmetry, Jews must be allowed to live across the border in Arab territory. Catherine Cook expresses her outrage that Israel actually claims a tiny amount of land that happens to be heavily Jewish demographically. If there is a protecting fence, she wants West Bank Jews to be outside it. But that makes her appear as if she wants those Jews to be murdered. Bruce Thornton argues coherently that all of us who value law and individual freedom ought to support Israel. Sarah Helm disagrees, asking us to sacrifice Israel to appease Arabs and saying (quite unconvincingly) that Israel is immoral anyway. Paul Findley blames the 9/11 terrorist attacks on American support for Israel and says that "Israel is a scofflaw nation and should be treated as such." Once again, I feel that if even Israel is a scofflaw, everyone is. The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs points out that it is Israel's existence, not the status of the peace process, that is the main Levantine issue. Lee Hamilton argues that the United States can help resolve the conflict by getting both sides to recognize the legitimacy of the other. I disagree, of course, and feel that the Arab side is not a genuine potential peace partner. Leon Hadar takes a different point of view, and says that the United States should not attempt to mediate, as our most recent attempt simply got both sides to harden their positions. I disagree with that as well. I highly recommend this fascinating book. 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Both Sides Now By Smallchief I'll give this book four stars for its effort to present both sides to the argument about Israel and the Palestinians. There is an essay titled "Israel belongs to the Jews" and a counter essay titled "Palestine belongs to the Arabs," an essay that says Israelis are terrorists and another that says Palestinians are terrorists. Point, counterpoint. I have some complaints, however. The essays tend to be shallow rehashes of familiar material. As an example, the usual Israeli claim is made that Palestine before Jews was a nearly uninhabited wilderness and that Israelis made the desert bloom. That's incorrect; every bush and every rock in this ancient land has had an owner for at least 10,000 years. And even if it were correct it wouldn't mean that the earlier inhabitants of Palestine have no property or human rights. There is also much unnecessary Israeli and Arab bashing. No need exists for either side to demonize the other; the great majority of both Jews and Arabs are decent people who would prefer peace to the long-standing conflict in the Holy Land. Some important issues hardly receive attention. What about the 700,000 Palestinians displaced by Israel in 1948? How many of them departed voluntarily and how many were thrown

out and had their property seized without compensation by Israel? Should they have the right to return and reclaim their property if deprived of it by force? Another problem is the lack of Palestinian voices in this book. From the list of about 20 authors contributing essays I can only identify with certainty two originating with Arabs. One of them by Ziad Asali is about the only forward looking essay in the book. The remainder of the pro-Palestinian essays are written by Americans and Israelis. Can't the Palestinians speak for themselves? This book is worth reading for a quick look at the common points by both sides in this long standing war of words and arms, but meatier and more thoughtful material is available. Smallchief0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. excellent discussion - complex topic By Lori Ellingboethis books is a good way for us laymen to begin to understand the many complex viewpoints surrounding the state of Israel. I am not very political, but this helped me to understand alot more about a country where there is alot of history, alot of emotion, and MANY view points. Lori

In 1947 the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into two states - one Arab and one Jewish. But the vote was not unanimous. Since declaring its independence in 1948 in its traditional homeland, the Jewish state of Israel has been in nearly constant conflict. The authors in this book explore the founding of Israel, potential solutions to the Arab-Israeli dispute, America's relationship with the Jewish state, and the question of its right to exist. (20020801)