



To the Editor

The comments that follow address several points made by Karine Walther in her review of my book *Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine, and the Foundations of U.S. Policy in the Middle East* (Columbia University Press, 2015), which appeared in the Spring 2017 issue of *JPS*. They deal with the question of sources and their dates of publication, a few of which are cited below.

Walther states that I relied “on newly available U.S. archival sources,” which she doubtless meant as a compliment. But in practice, I relied on existing U.S. sources and was indebted to the works of Palestinian and Israeli New Historians, many of whose findings were complemented by evidence provided in the U.S. record.

With respect to the question of sources and their dates of publication: among U.S. sources dealing with the events of 1948, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948*, volume 5, *The Near East, South Asia, and Africa* (in two parts), part 2, was published in 1976. The Max W. Ball Papers of the Harry S. Truman Library, which proved to be invaluable, were opened to the public in the same year. Far from being “newly available,” these sources had long been open to the public.

Israeli military archives which proved critical to the work of historians such as Benny Morris became available in 1982 as Morris disclosed in *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). In the same text, Morris points out that it was British, U.S., and UN archives which he later saw that provided him with the “solid documentary basis on which to write the contemplated study,” a reference to his work.

The question remains why the evidence provided in U.S. sources, such as the *Foreign Relations of the United States* volume cited above, which had long been available to the public, has been inadequately examined. Why has the evidence of Washington’s understanding of the Palestinian problem, the objectives of the Zionist movement, Israeli responsibility for the Palestinian refugee problem, and the conditions leading to Washington’s abandonment of its commitment to the repatriation of Palestinian refugees, received far less attention than they deserve? As to the role of oil in U.S. policy, that has also long been on the record, although what I termed the “oil connection” involving the relationship between Max Ball and Eliahu Epstein and its implications for U.S. policy toward the Palestine problem, as well as Israel’s future relations with the United States, has not previously been discussed.

Irene I. Gendzier



The Journal of Palestine Studies (ISSN 0377-919X, online ISSN 1533-8614) is published quarterly by the University of California Press, 155 Grand Avenue, Suite 400, Oakland, CA 94612-3764, for the Institute for Palestine Studies. See www.ucpressjournals.com/journal.php?j=jps for single issue and subscription orders, and claims information. Periodicals postage paid at Oakland, CA, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send all address changes to *Journal of Palestine Studies*, University of California Press, 155 Grand Avenue, Suite 400, Oakland, CA 94612. Please direct all questions regarding subscriptions to University of California Press at the address above or by email at customerservice@ucpress.edu. Domestic claims for non-receipt of issue must be made within 90 days of the mail date, overseas claims within 180 days. Mail dates can be checked here: <http://www.ucpressjournals.com/ucpress.asp?page=ReleaseSchedule>.

UC Press does not begin accepting claims for an issue until thirty (30) days after the mail date. Canadian GST 89626 2698 RT0001.

Correspondence with the editors should be directed to the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 3501 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20007, jps@palestine-studies.org, (202) 342-3990. Opinions expressed in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* are solely those of their authors and do not reflect the opinions of the Institute for Palestine Studies. Quotations from articles and other passages from the *Journal* may not be reproduced for sales or advertising without the prior written permission of both author and publisher.

Copying notice: Permission to distribute electronically, republish, resell, license, or otherwise repurpose material from *JPS*, as well as requests for offprints, reprints, or photocopies for classroom use may be submitted through the University of California Press website at www.ucpress.edu/journals/rights.htm.

Articles appearing in the *Journal of Palestine Studies* are abstracted and indexed in the following select databases: Alternative Press Index; America: History and Life; Arts & Humanities Citation Index; CSA Political Science & Government; CSA Worldwide Political Science Abstracts; Current Contents; Ethnic NewsWatch; Geographical Abstracts; Index to Jewish Periodicals; International Bibliography of the Social Sciences; International Development Abstracts; International Political Science Abstracts; Middle East Abstracts; PAIS International; ProQuest Research Library; Social Sciences Citation Index; Social Services Abstracts; Sociological Abstracts. For complete abstracting and indexing information, please visit www.ucpress.edu/journals/jps.

Design: Orcada Media Group

Composition: diacriTech

Printing: Sheridan Press

Printed by The Sheridan Press on Forest Stewardship Council®-certified paper.