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to escalation of its conflict with the Arabs. This was not the result of the repeated wrong-headed decisions of Israel's leaders: it was the working out of the dialectic of Zionism.

Once launched, the Zionist project carried within itself the forces that pointed it towards success. Israeli successes would trigger the maximalist ambitions that many of the leading Zionists had cherished from the beginning; they would increase the flow of Jewish colons to Israel; they would empower the Jewish state to act as the political centre of world Jewry, organising them globally to strengthen Israel, to win allies, and shield it from criticism.

At the same time, Israel's capture of Palestine, its ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, and its lengthening record of wars against the Arabs would create the Arab and Islamic enemy, whom Israel -- with Western arms and money -- would very helpfully crush, only to demand and receive yet greater supplies of arms and money from the West.

Once created, the Jewish state would be driven by a powerful, nearly irresistible dialectic to draw the United States -- and to a lesser degree much of the West -- into a deepening conflict against the Islamic world.

In truth, the Palestinians have never missed an opportunity -- to assert their rights against the greatest odds, against a settler-colonial movement aided and abetted by the most powerful states in the West. For their heroism, their endless sacrifices, the Palestinians deserve the accolades of all men and women who cherish human rights over brute force.

In truth, Israel too has never missed an opportunity -- to defenestrate the Palestinians, denude their lives, demonise their resistance, and denigrate their culture. For their unending violations of the rights of Palestinians, the world needs to look the Israelis in their eyes and tell them that their conduct dishonours the victims of the Holocaust, victims they eagerly claim as flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone.

The narrative of missed opportunities is malicious when it refers to Palestinians; or misleading, when it is aimed at Israelis.

References

1. The first two quotes are from Nahum Goldmann, *The Jewish Paradox* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978): Pg 99, 121-122.
2. Uri Avnery, "*Israel's missed opportunities for peace* (partial list)," Redress (May 28, 2006). http://www.redress.cc/palestine/uavnery20060528

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