



UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA PRESS
JOURNALS + DIGITAL PUBLISHING

Institute for Palestine Studies

Review: Nothing New

Author(s): Lenni Brenner

Reviewed work(s):

Psychological Warfare and Propaganda: Irgun Documentation. by Eli Tavin ; Yonah Alexander

Source: *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Autumn, 1984), p. 149

Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the Institute for Palestine Studies

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2537068>

Accessed: 07/01/2010 11:12

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=ucal>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



University of California Press and Institute for Palestine Studies are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Palestine Studies*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

happened, and who was responsible. But the facts Kapeliouk has assembled burn through his calm presentation. This resource cannot be read without evoking sorrow and anger.

Nothing New

Psychological Warfare and Propaganda: Irgun Documentation, Eli Tavin and Yonah Alexander, eds. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1983. xlv + 262 pages. Bibl. to p. 265. \$24.95; \$9.95, paper.

Reviewed by **Lenni Brenner**

This really is a book that should never have been published. It adds very little to our understanding of the Irgun and its role in the creation of the Israeli state.

There is a rather lengthy historical introduction to Zionism, but it contains nothing factually new, not even about the Irgun, rehashes a few stock lies, as with the fairy tale about Iraqi troops hidden in Deir Yassin, and is utterly devoid of insight. But, perhaps the worst feature of the book is its seventeen prisoners' speeches from the dock. It is in the genre of highly rhetorical denunciations of the "Nazo-British" as foreign tyrants, and even the most zealous partisan of the Irgun will find the collection boring in the extreme.

Most of the rest of the book consists of communiqués, unfortunately not enough of them from the pre-war Irgun. All of the post-1944 models are from the pen of Begin, which again tends to make for repetition. There are intellectual curios scattered throughout, but only a very few

of the Begin era documents are really required reading. Certainly the most important is the "Report of Conference Between Representatives of the UN Special Committee on Palestine and the Commander . . . of the Irgun." Begin let it all hang out in this 1947 interview: "On the outbreak of the war . . . the Irgun realized that Hitler meant his pronouncement concerning the destruction of the Jews" (p. 216). (A pious liar, their ideological mentor, Vladimir Jabotinsky, wrote *The Jewish War Front* in 1940, in which nothing about the coming extermination is mentioned.) And, of course, all of Jordan really belongs to the Jews. The future Zionist state would have Arab cabinet ministers. The Jews were really the "*de jure* majority in the country" (Palestine and Jordan) because the British had kept out those who wanted to come. The future Zionist state would be democratic in the sweet bye and bye, but the country would first have an unelected provisional government which "would last until all of the rightful citizens of Palestine are in the country." Begin did "not believe in such a phenomenon as independent Arab opposition to Jewish repatriation" (p. 222). It was all "instigated by the British." Reading this, it is easy enough to see why everyone outside the Irgun, including the vast majority of Zionists, thought of Israel's future Prime Minister and Nobel Prize winner as a fool and a madman.

There is one rather famous statement of Begin's, from his speech upon the creation of the Israeli state, in May 1948, that this writer can agree with: "Whoever does not recognize our natural right to our entire homeland, does not recognize our right to any part of it" (p. 245). In other words, if the Zionists aren't fully entitled to Amman they are not entitled to Tel Aviv. Well now, since most people don't think Amman is Jewish . . . ?