

**Episode 2,408: Debate: Israel and Palestine**

**Guests: Alan Futerman and Jeremy R. Hammond**

**WOODS:** I am delighted to welcome these two gentlemen today, because we are going to host a debate on an extremely contentious topic and really almost the only topic anybody's seriously discussing these days.

I will introduce our debaters in just a moment, but I will first read to you the resolution that they will be debating. And to a degree, some of the language in this resolution was drawn from an article written by Alan Futerman (one of the two debaters) with our friend Walter Block in the *Wall Street Journal*.

An article I'll link to in the description, by the way, and on the show notes page TomWoods.com/2408, called *"The Moral duty to destroy Hamas"*. So, the resolution being debated today is, *"Israel is justified in doing 'whatever it takes' to 'completely destroy' Hamas."*

And I include those quotation marks because those are words taken directly from the article in question. So, first, arguing in the affirmative, we have Alan Futerman, an economist. He was adjunct professor of institutional economics at UCEL Argentina.

He has been published in such journals as *International Journal of Finance and Economics* and the *Review of Austrian Economics*. His work has also been featured in such publications as *Financial Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, and he co-authored a book from Springer in 2021 with Walter Block called *The Classical Liberal Case for Israel*.

Arguing in the negative is Jeremy R Hammond, an independent journalist whose work focuses on exposing dangerous state propaganda that serves to manufacture consent for criminal government policies. You can read his articles and sign up for his newsletter at JeremyRHammond.com.

Now with that, we're going to begin with allowing each of the debaters to have ten uninterrupted minutes to speak, and then they'll have time for rebuttal. And we have some other things planned after that.

So, given that Alan is arguing in the affirmative, arguing for the resolution, the three of us decided mutually at the beginning that he would go first. So, Alan, the stage is yours.

**FUTERMAN:** Thank you, Tom, for organizing this debate and for inviting me. The resolution for this debate is, as you said, *"Israel is justified in doing whatever it takes to completely destroy Hamas."* So, the first question is, what is Hamas?

Hamas is a genocidal, murderous Islamist group founded in 1987 by followers of the Muslim Brotherhood, and that controls the Gaza Strip since 2007. It is funded and supported by Iran, Qatar, and Turkey.

On Saturday, October 7th, thousands of assassins of this group entered Israeli towns and roads and committed mass murder of the type Jews have not experienced since the Holocaust or Russian pogroms.

It is not only that they killed more than 1,400 people, injured over 4,000, about 200 kidnapped, and launched more than 6,000 rockets to Israeli towns and cities. It is also about how they did it, with a level of sadistic detail that is only comparable with the Nazi Einsatzgruppen.

They slaughtered innocent men and women, including babies and elderly, in their homes in cold blood. They tortured parents in front of their children and later executed them with their hands tied behind their backs. They murdered children in front of their parents.

They tortured their victims, tearing out eyes and cutting body parts. They raped women and later executed them. They massacred children and burned entire families alive. But make no mistake, this horrendous level of destruction of human life was not the exception.

For Hamas, it is both the norm and their stated goal. As they have shown again and again with the launching of rockets, suicide bombings, and widespread murder of innocent Israelis. The goal of the group is to commit genocide, not only against Israelis, but also against Jews, as such, wherever they are in the world.

Since this is a libertarian channel, let me clarify that this includes from Ludwig von Mises to Walter Block, as they declare in their original charter by quoting Islamic sources.

And I quote, *"The day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews, killing the Jews. When the Jews will hide behind stones and trees, the stones and trees will say, 'Oh Muslims, Oh Abdullah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.'"*

Later the charter says, and I quote again, *"Israel, Judaism, and Jews challenge Islam and the Muslim people. May the cowards never sleep."* Actually, Hamas's stated intentions embody the real reason behind the wars against Israel since its founding in 1948.

These wars were not (as some Westerners or libertarians believe) because of land disputes or property titles – by the way, where justice is also on the side of Israel. Hamas would not accept the state of Israel, even if the lands under its control would be certified by John Locke himself.

The charter of Hamas explains why, and I quote, *"The Islamic Resistance Movement believes that the Land of Palestine is an Islamic waqf consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgment Day."*

Hamas further declares that, *"It is necessary to instill in the minds of the Muslim generations that the Palestinian problem is a religious problem and should be dealt with on this basis."*

Therefore, the purpose of Hamas is not only to eliminate the State of Israel, but also to kill all its citizens, as they themselves claim. Given its genocidal nature, it makes sense that the charter of Hamas is as judeophobic as Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

In the charter, they talk about the Jews repeating the same murderous myths of the Nazis, as if Jews were a cosmic enemy, concentrating all evil. Hamas claims that the Jews are behind everything from wars to world media to the Freemasons.

They base all this nonsense in the same forgery that incited murderous pogroms in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, the protocols of the Elders of Zion. This hatred of Jews is deeply rooted in Palestinian Arab society, especially in the Gaza Strip.

This is why there are large parades and sweets are freely given on the streets every time Jews get killed. This is what explains their motivation to mass murder, as they themselves say in their charter.

And I quote again, *"Allah is its target. The prophet is its model. The Koran, its constitution. Jihad is its path. And death for the sake of Allah is the loftiest of its wishes."*

This is a movement that loves death and destruction and hates human life and flourishing. This same maniacal and murderous hatred that Hamas showed two weeks ago appeared in Hebron 94 years ago, when mobs of Arabs murdered, raped, and tortured Jews while killing dozens.

At the time, there was no State of Israel, no checkpoints, no security fence, nothing. But the same essential hatred, the root of war existed. Hatred of Jewish presence in the land of Israel in any form. Israel's enemies claimed that Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the like appeared because of Israeli actions such as checkpoints, security fences, or defensive operations.

But the causal chain is the opposite. Checkpoints, security fences, and defensive operations by the IDF are the consequence of Jew-hatred, of which Hamas is only one type of form. If Hamas disappears, if Jew-hatred disappears, there is no need for checkpoints, fences, or defensive operations.

Israel's enemies say that the problem is the Jewish settlements. But the intent to destroy Israel predates the time Israel achieved control of Gaza from Egypt in 1967, and persisted after Israel delivered Gaza to the Palestinians in 2005, at the cost of expelling its own population.

There are no Jewish settlements in Gaza. It is also claimed that Israel imposed a blockade of Gaza, which is why this genocide is somehow justified. The truth is that the blockade is of weapons, not of goods.

And after the events we've seen two weeks ago, it should be sufficiently clear why there is a blockade of weapons. Egypt, by the way, also has a border with Gaza and enforces a similar blockade. But when Israel is not involved, nobody seems to care.

Moreover, thousands of residents in Gaza had work permits to work in Israel. Some of these, it is suspected, worked with the assassins to prepare for the pogrom that we saw. Some people claim that Hamas assassins are freedom fighters, but the only freedom that Hamas allows and promotes is the freedom to kill Jews.

What kind of regime do you think Hamas imposed in Gaza? It is a theocratic dictatorship that prohibits all freedoms. There is no freedom of expression, of association, of religion, nor of trade. Religious minorities almost don't exist under its rule and are severely persecuted.

Women are treated like garbage, and sexual minorities are savagely murdered. Journalists who want to speak the truth are persecuted, and political opposition is crushed. This is the type of freedom that Hamas supports. The freedom to murder and to die.

Hamas does not care for the Palestinian Arabs living under this regime. These people depend on the food, education, and health provided by institutions such as the UNRWA and tens of other Western and Arab organizations.

Hamas received billions of dollars, which it invested in weapons and material for their military infrastructure, including a massive network of tunnels. They even use water pipes originally intended for civilian infrastructure to build their murderous rockets.

What kind of person could be in favor that this group of maniacs govern a civilian population? Is that to be pro-Palestinian? What do you think the chant "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" actually means?

It is nothing less than genocide for the Jews and medieval dictatorship for Palestinian Arabs. No decent person could support this group of assassins.

Seeing how they treat and what they do to their own population, it should not surprise anyone that they place their rocket launchers in highly populated civilian areas, that they stockpile weapons in hospitals and mosques.

Given their lust for death, it is only obvious that they intend to increase civilian casualties on their side to use them as propaganda for their nefarious genocidal ends.

Israel, on the other hand, does everything in its power to reduce civilian casualties, from dropping leaflets to sending text messages asking people to leave their buildings from where Hamas is launching its rockets before its defensive operations.

If it were the goal of the IDF (and this is important) to commit genocide in Gaza, the area would have been leveled a long time ago and the operation would have only taken ten minutes. But that's not the goal. Since 2007, Hamas has launched tens of thousands of rockets to civilian areas in Israel.

The amount of harm they were able to make was reduced because Israel protects its population with shelters and the Iron Dome that stops most of the murderous rockets in the air.

Yet, some Hamas campaigns have been so intense that the IDF had no choice but to launch defensive operations, such as in 2008, 2012, 2014, and others. The purpose was to stop Hamas attacks. Now, those operations were clearly not enough because the genocidal nature of Hamas will never change.

Not only that, but it also gets worse by the day. It is therefore a necessity (not only for Israel, but for Palestinian Arabs themselves) that Hamas be destroyed. And this is why Israel is justified in doing whatever it takes to completely destroy Hamas.

What does "whatever it takes" mean? I am a civilian, so I cannot recommend strategy. But what it means is that Israel has a moral right – in fact, a moral duty – to protect its citizens and end this threat once and for all. It means complete total Israeli victory.

Saying otherwise is not a humanitarian position, but quite the opposite. It is supporting the genocide of Jews and theocratic dictatorship for the Arabs. As long as Hamas exists, Jewish lives are in danger. This must be stopped, and any decent human being should support it.

So, thank you, Tom.

**WOODS:** All right. Thank you. Alan. Jeremy, now it's your turn.

**HAMMOND:** Sure. First, thanks, Tom, for hosting this debate. So, Alan and I agree that there can be no possible justification for the horrific atrocities committed by Hamas terrorists against Israeli civilians on October 7th, nor for indiscriminate rocket attacks launched at Israel from Gaza.

However, Alan would have us believe that Israel's violence against Palestinian civilians is justified. And to support that conclusion, he claims that the root cause of the conflict is inherent Arab hatred of Jews.

The implicit assumption of that argument is that Palestinians have no legitimate grievances against Israel. And to support that assumption, in his *Wall Street Journal* article, and as you just heard him, Alan cites the Hebron massacre of 1929, which occurred during the mandate period.

And by looking at his own example, we can see that this assumption is false. The root cause of the conflict is not Arab anti-Semitism, but rather the rejection by the Zionists and their Western supporters of the Palestinians right to self-determination.

In 1917, Great Britain pledged support for the Zionist project to establish a Jewish state in the place of Palestine, while at the same time contradictorily promising support for Arab independence from Ottoman rule.

After World War One, Britain enforced a belligerent occupation aimed at preventing the inhabitants of Palestine from exercising self-determination until the Jewish population through mass immigration became the majority.

The Arab Palestinians were well aware of how their rights were being prejudiced under the mandate. And as acknowledged by the British government, it was that awareness among the Arab population that was the major cause of increasing Arab animosity towards Jews.

After each of the major outbreaks of violence in 1920, 1921, and the 1929 Hebron massacre, Britain investigated the root causes.

And in each instance, it determined that the underlying cause was not Arab anti-Semitism, but the knowledge among the Palestinians that the Zionist leadership aimed to subject them and ultimately to expel them from their land.

Palestinians legitimate historical grievances include the Zionist ethnic cleansing of most of the Arab population from their homes in 1948, which was how the Jewish state of Israel came into existence.

Any serious analysis of the causes and solutions for the current horrific round of violence must take into consideration the legitimate historical grievances of the Palestinian people.

To quickly touch on the 1967 war, the war started on the morning of June 5th when Israel launched a surprise attack on Egypt, destroying the Egyptian Air Force while its planes were still on the ground. During the war, Israel invaded and occupied the Palestinian territories of Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Around 300,000 Palestinians were expelled from those territories during the war, which is what the Arabs describe as Alnaksa (or the setback) and the 1948 ethnic cleansing they referred to as the Nakba, or the catastrophe.

The CIA accurately had predicted that if war broke out, it would be started by Israel, and that due to its overwhelming military superiority, Israel would defeat the combined Arab armies within a week or two. And this is what Israelis call the Six Day War.

In November 1967, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 242 which emphasized the principle of international law that the acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible.

And therefore, that Israel was required to fully withdraw to the pre-June 1967 lines, which are also known as the 1949 Armistice Lines, or the Green Line for the color with which it was drawn on the map.

Resolution 242 serves as the legal basis also for what is known as the two-state solution, which is not to be confused with what either Israel or the US have advocated under the US led so-called peace process.

And as I document in meticulous detail in my book *Obstacle to Peace*, the whole purpose of the so-called peace process was to block implementation of the two-state solution.

Coming to more recent history, Alan argues that Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, in his *Wall Street Journal* article, "so that Palestinian Arabs could begin building their own state, but they instead chose Hamas."

In fact, the purpose of the Gaza withdrawal and the calculation of then-Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, was that it would provide political cover for the planned expansion of Israel's illegal settlement regime in the occupied West Bank, and enable the Israeli military to shift focus from Gaza to advancing the goals of the settlement regime.

Notably, today in Israel, Netanyahu is being criticized for advancing the same policy to which critics attribute what has been called an intelligence failure preceding the October 7th terrorist attacks.

When Hamas was founded in 1987, Israel initially supported it as a means to undermine the PLO, whose leader, Yasser Arafat, had dangerously moved away from armed resistance toward international diplomacy and acceptance of the two-state solution.

Israel shifted its policy toward Hamas once it, too, started issuing statements indicating a willingness to move away from armed violence toward diplomatic engagement. In 2004, Hamas offered a long-term truce with Israel in exchange for an end to Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.

Israel's response was to assassinate Hamas's paraplegic founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. Critics of that attack included Israeli officials, who observed that it served to reverse Hamas's move toward moderation and to empower the more extreme members of the organization.

Since 2004, Hamas has repeatedly issued statements expressing its willingness to accept a Palestinian state alongside Israel along the pre-June 1967 lines, with a long-term truce to establish mutual intent and recognition without prejudice to the internationally recognized right of Palestinian refugees from the 1948 war to return to their homeland.

This includes, in 2017, Hamas's issuance of what some media described as a new charter that stated that Hamas's struggle was not against Jews because of their religion or because they are Jewish, but against the Zionist project to replace Palestine with a Jewish state.

The document further reiterated Hamas's acceptance of a Palestinian state along the 1967 lines, without prejudice to the rights of Palestinian refugees.

Coming to Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, in February 2005, although not a party to the agreement, Hamas committed to honoring a cease-fire between Israel and Fatah, the party of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

And rather than encouraging Hamas's movement toward engagement in the political process, Israel continued to seek to isolate the group and ensure its radicalization by marginalizing the more moderate voices within its ranks.

The IDF completed its withdrawal from Gaza in mid-September 2005, and no rockets were fired at Israel until September 23rd, when Israel launched a raid in the West Bank, killing three members of Islamic Jihad, which prompted rocket fire from Islamic Jihad members in Gaza.

At the time, Hamas was holding a rally in Gaza, during which a truck exploded. And while Israel denied responsibility, Hamas joined in firing rockets. On September 25th, two days later, Hamas announced its return to honouring the cease-fire.

Moving forward to January 2006, Hamas won legislative elections, defeating Fatah. The US and Israel then conspired with Fatah to overthrow the Hamas-led government, including by arming Fatah special forces.

Israel also responded by implementing a strict blockade of Gaza to punish the civilian population for having Hamas as their governing authority. And it's not true that that's aimed only at blocking weapons from entering.

In June 9th, 2006, Israel launched artillery into Gaza, killing Palestinians picnicking on the beach. Hamas responded with rocket-fire. Western media, including *CNN*, the *AP*, the *BBC*, and the *New York Times* acknowledged that Hamas had been honoring the cease-fire for 16 months.

And that pattern repeated itself again in 2008, for example, prior to Israel's Operation Cast Lead. It was Israel that violated a cease-fire that until then was being strictly observed by Hamas. We can also look at Operation Cast Lead to get a better understanding of the nature of Israel's military operations in Gaza.

When Walter and Alan write that Israel has a right to do whatever it takes to completely destroy Hamas, they are echoing Israel's Dahiya doctrine.

This was the policy that the Israeli military announced it would implement for Operation Cast Lead, explained by IDF officials as the deliberate use of disproportionate force. In other words, Israel announced in advance that it intended to commit war crimes in Gaza, which is precisely what it proceeded to do with US support.

Israel's indiscriminate attacks during Operation Cast Lead included attacks on residential buildings, news media offices, mosques, schools (including UN run schools being used to shelter civilians) ambulances, mobile clinics, hospitals, UN humanitarian aid convoys, and the main UN compound where humanitarian supplies were being stored.

Israel maintained throughout that Hamas was responsible for all civilian deaths and destruction of civilian infrastructure, on the grounds that Hamas was using civilians as human shields. But Israel's use of that term bears no relationship to its definition under international law.

What Israel means by "human shields" is any civilians that are killed by virtue of their being in Gaza. Israel's allegations were investigated by international human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, as well as numerous UN inquiries, including a UN fact-finding mission headed up by a self-described Zionist.

There is not a single documented instance of Palestinian civilians being killed in Israeli attacks during Operation Cast Lead because they were being used at the time by Hamas to shield military targets or operations.

These investigations did document, on the other hand, the use of Palestinian civilians as human shields by Israeli soldiers. Israel's current military operation in Gaza has already killed more Palestinians than either the 22 day Operation Cast Lead or the 50 day Operation Protective Edge in 2014.

And apart from the devastating bombing, Israel's total siege of the densely populated strip that has deprived Palestinians of food, water, electricity, fuel, and other essential goods necessary for survival is in itself a war crime.

To say that Israel has a right to do whatever it takes to completely destroy Hamas is equivalent to saying that Israel has a right to starve Palestinians to death and to engage in indiscriminate attacks, including the deliberate use of disproportionate force to achieve a military objective.

I maintain the contrary position that Israel does not have a right (much less a moral duty) to commit war crimes in Gaza.

**WOODS:** All right, Jeremy, thank you very much. Alan, I might have said four minutes. Let's say an even five. You can have five minutes to respond to Jeremy.

**FUTERMAN:** Okay. Well, first of all, in the book that we wrote with Walter, we deal with all of the things that Jeremy just mentioned. Actually, in chapter seven, we deal with Jeremy himself, with the arguments that he used several times.

And we are still waiting for his reply. So, I invite you, Jeremy, to write a paper or an article replying to what we say in chapter seven regarding your arguments. And I invite anyone that wants to learn more about this, to just read the book, especially chapter seven and chapter three that deal with what you are saying.

Now, many things. The first one, I'm going to repeat what I quoted from Hamas, from their charter themselves saying so.

Because it seems that what you're trying to do, Jeremy, is that you're trying to interpret the conflict as you would want to read it, instead of identifying what they themselves say about it and what are their stated goals.

Because, basically, they are not saying that they want peace or anything with Israel. They want to kill all Jews, and they are showing it by what they did two weeks ago. So, this is not just my imagination or anything like that.

So, I'm going to quote again, they say, quoting Islamic sources in their charter, *"The day of judgment will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews, killing the Jews, when the Jews will hide behind stones and trees, the stones and trees will say, 'Oh Muslim, Oh Abdullah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him."*

I repeat again, this includes Ludwig von Mises, Murray Rothbard, Walter Block, any Jew anywhere. Not an Israeli, Jews as such, as they have shown two weeks ago. Another important point. You're talking about ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Palestinian Arabs in Gaza.

Well, in Gaza there are 2 million Palestinian Arabs, and the area is 360 square kilometers. Are you saying that it's a deliberate genocide by IDF? If the IDF would want to kill everyone in the area, they would do it in ten minutes, Jeremy.

And if civilians die, that is because Hamas is launching its rockets from civilian areas. This is the fact, Jeremy. I mean, you cannot deny it. It's simply a fact. You say Israel attacks mosques and hospitals and buildings where people live.

It's because they have their military infrastructure there. They launch their rockets from those places. I mean, those are simple facts. If Israel would want to destroy everything, they'd do it. They'd simply do it in ten minutes. You yourself should recognize (and you do) that the IDF is a powerful army.

So, I mean, that's all I can say. Then you talk about proportionality. I mean, what would be a proportional response on what happened two weeks ago, deliberate murdering of entire families? I mean, what what would qualify as a proportionate response?

Another point, you say that the Palestinians were never offered the possibility to create their state. Well, in fact, yes, it happened several times. Actually, from 1947 on – before, even. '67, at the end of the '70s, in 2000, they had the best offer they could ever get.

They rejected it because this is not a territorial dispute. The wars against Israel have a religious basis. They are not about property rights or land disputes. I mean, it's not that Hamas is basing its philosophy on The Ethics of Liberty by Murray Rothbard. I mean, this is completely insane.

What they say, I just mentioned. It's quite clear to see. And just one more point about this idea of genocide. There were a million Arabs in 1949, in the area. Now you have 2 million in Gaza and 3 million in Judea and Samaria.

So, I don't know what you're talking about when you talk about genocide or ethnic cleansing. There has been no such thing. There was ethnic cleansing in the Arab world of Jews.

1 million Jews were expelled from the countries where they had been living for hundreds, thousands of years after the state of Israel was created, and even before. So, no one's talking about that.

Now, why? Because Israel absorbed that population. But Arab states left Palestinian Arabs that, as a result of the war, ended up being displaced. Well, they left them in refugee camps.

But – and this is important to say. Within Israel, there is a big Arab population. 20% of the population of Israel is Arab, and they are citizens just like anyone else. They have TV stations, they have political parties, they have the media, I mean, even – and I'm going to say this and I leave you to reply.

There is one Arab party in Israel with links to the Muslim Brotherhood that was part of the previous coalition. That is Israel's democracy, and that is the level of freedom that there is in Israel for the Arab population, Arab citizens of Israel.

So, that's all I can say at this point.

**WOODS:** All right, Jeremy, five minutes on your end.

**HAMMOND:** Sure. Well, first thing, thanks for informing me that your book directly addresses – I guess I'm named in the book. That's the first I've heard of it, and I certainly will check that out.

You mentioned the charter again, the Hamas charter, as though I had suggested that that was a figment of your imagination. I never did, but also you said: *Let's look at what Hamas actually says.*

And that's what I did. After the Hamas charter, I've cited numerous statements, referenced numerous statements over the course of many years from Hamas, including the 2017 policy document that I mentioned. You, again, are making the same argument I already addressed.

That civilians only die because they're being used by Hamas as human shields, or because Hamas is firing rockets from the roofs of buildings that are bombed by the IDF – this type of argument.

Again, numerous international investigations looked at these types of allegations from the IDF for Operation Cast Lead, and there wasn't a single instance where human shields were the cause of civilian deaths during that operation.

Speaking of proportionality, you say, what would be a proportional response to the October 7th terrorist attacks? Well, the principle of proportionality is referring to any specific strike. So, Israel has a target that it wants to launch an attack on.

Whether mortars, artillery, or bombing, whatever the means of attack, any potential harms, damages to civilian infrastructure, or civilian casualties, it must be proportionate to the direct military advantage seen.

As an example, during Operation Cast Lead, Israel burned down the UN warehouse with white phosphorus munitions, which are illegal under international law to be used in densely populated areas, and that happened despite the UN repeatedly notifying the IDF that they were hitting the warehouse.

And the IDF persisted in attacking and burning down the warehouse with no possible military advantage. There was no military target there, and so that's just an example of the claim that's just completely false.

That that's the only reason why civilian objects or persons are hit is because there's rockets being launched nearby or something. It's just not true. You say that the Palestinians have had opportunities for their own state, but that's not true.

In fact, going back to the UN partition plan, resolution 181 (which was never implemented) what they were proposing was completely inequitable. And the Arabs were, of course, right to reject it. Because if we look at land ownership statistics – this is from 1945.

And you can see the green is the Arab ownership, and the red is the Jewish ownership. By the end of the mandate. Jews only managed to acquire about 7% of the land, and Arabs owned more land in every single district in Palestine, including Jaffa, which included Tel Aviv.

The partition plan recommended taking about 55% of the territory of Palestine for Jewish sovereignty. So, it was completely inequitable, and Arabs were perfectly reasonable to reject that.

And coming to the peace process, every single concession made or offered during the entire peace process came from the Palestinian side. Because Alan is speaking from the perspective of what Israel wants, but the legal basis for the peace process is grounded in what Israel has a legal entitlement to.

And it isn't entitled to a single inch of Gaza or the West Bank, and that includes East Jerusalem. Now let's see. You mentioned that it's not a territorial dispute. Well, it most certainly is a territorial dispute.

You deny genocide? Well, I never used the word genocide. But you also deny the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, which is an untenable denial. That is the means by which Israel came into existence.

UN Resolution 181 neither partitioned Palestine nor conferred any legal authority to the Zionist leadership for the unilateral declaration of May 14th, by which time a quarter million Palestinians had already been ethnically cleansed from their homes.

And by the end of the war, about 750,000 Palestinians had become refugees, never allowed to return to their homeland. This is the fundamental root cause of the conflict. And as for Israel being a democracy, well, it's a fundamentally undemocratic country for the reason that I just explained.

**WOODS:**  Okay, now that we've completed that portion, I will exercise the moderator's prerogative and ask each of the debaters a question of my own that they will respond to, and then I'll give them an opportunity to question each other.

So, Alan, since you went first, I'll start with a question for you. In March 2019, we have Benjamin Netanyahu saying the following, *"Anyone who wants to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state has to support bolstering Hamas and transferring money to Hamas.*

*This is part of our strategy to isolate the Palestinians in Gaza from the Palestinians in the West Bank. It's impossible to reach an agreement with them. Everyone knows this, but we control the height of the flames."*

Now, there are some ellipses in that, but it gives you the idea. What does that mean? And does that sound like a strategy that you would support?

**FUTERMAN:** Well, what it means is pretty clear. Well, Israel – I mean, governments, as such, make mistakes. So, I don't think this is a channel I should be clarifying that to you. Because governments are what they are, right?

Now, in this respect, the idea was that Israel could control or limit the damage that Hamas was able to do on its civilian population, for example, by launching thousands of rockets. And since Israel's got the Iron Dome and it's got a very powerful IDF.

And so, the idea was: *Okay, so every three years or so, we will have to launch a defensive operation in order to stop them. And then we wait three years, and it continues. That's the status quo*. That was completely wrong. And we saw why that was wrong two weeks ago.

Because Hamas needs to be destroyed. There is no way to postpone this operation, this defensive measure. So, yes, Netanyahu was wrong. I think that anyone would recognize that, so I don't see what's the problem with that.

**WOODS:** Well, I guess I don't want to break my rules. I don't think I entitled myself to a follow up question, but has this not been a general Israeli strategy vis-a-vis Hamas? Is this something that's exclusive to Netanyahu?

**FUTERMAN:** Well, that is correct, because the alternative to the status quo is to do what the IDF is doing right now, which is to launch a defensive operation to destroy Hamas.

Now, given that Israel was not willing to do that – apart from other things, because of pressure from the United States and from Europe for what that would entail – then they had to choose for the status quo.

Wait, they launch thousands of rockets, then we defend ourselves and we use the Iron Dome, and we wait, and we wait, and we wait. Well, no more waiting, basically.

**WOODS:** All right, Jeremy, I have a question for you. I saw a video recently of a bunch of students marching through the corridor of an American high school, chanting, *"From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free."*

And what we hear about that expression is that it indicates support for the complete destruction of the Jewish people from all of the territory in question, from the river to the sea. And we've seen this phrase repeated and chanted in many places and contexts.

So, whatever injustices you might cite in the foundation of Israel, today, it's 2023. And real people live in Israel, so what exactly would you have them do when faced with what appears to be a kind of hatred that pervades the entire society?

**HAMMOND:** Sure. Well, yeah, it depends on the context, what people might mean by "free Palestine, from the river to the sea. Reasonable people, what they mean by that would be they're advocating a one-state solution. Simple as that.

And so, my view is that we should ought first to aim for the two-state solution. That's what the international community has a virtual consensus in favor of. It's rejected by US and Israel.

The Palestinians have repeatedly expressed their willingness to accept the two-state solution – the Palestinian Authority, specifically. And once two states are established, essentially, what that means is the end of the Israeli occupation, which is a reasonable goal.

And then once that happens, then there's the issue of the refugees, and that needs to be addressed somehow. It might involve a limited number of refugees returning to live in Israel, because, of course, most of their homes don't exist anymore.

There are Palestinians today who still hold the keys to the homes that they fled, but most of those homes probably don't exist because Israel, the Zionists, literally wiped their villages off the map. So, those would be the two phases that I see.

But people talk about, like, a single-state solution. I think that's a reasonable goal. I would personally favor a single democratic state with equality under the law between Palestinians and Israelis. But how do we get there, right? How do we get there?

And so, I say, well, let's first go for the two-state solution, which entails full Israeli withdrawal, and then we can deal with the refugee issue.

**WOODS:** All right. So, now we've reached the time when the debaters will have an opportunity to question each other. So, Alan, we'll start with you. Do you have a question you'd like to ask Jeremy?

**FUTERMAN:** Yes. Well, Jeremy is in favor of a one-state solution. In other words, basically the destruction of the state of Israel. Given what we saw two weeks ago, Jeremy, what do you think would happen to more than 7 million Israeli Jews that live in Israel in a one-state solution?

**HAMMOND:** What would happen to them?

**FUTERMAN:** Yes. What would happen to them? For example, if Hamas is in control of the entire state, what will happen to them?

**HAMMOND:** I don't foresee Hamas being in control of the state. I don't think that would be possible or politically feasible.

**FUTERMAN:** Really? Why not? They control the Gaza Strip. Why not?

**HAMMOND:** Yeah, well, there's a reason they control the Gaza Strip, as I've already explained. Which was because Israel and the US opposed their move toward a unity government with the Palestinian Authority, that opposed their move toward moderation, and tried to drive a wedge between Hamas and Fatah.

So, it's Israel's own policies that have really created this monster in Gaza. And so, I don't foresee – I mean, it's hard to look at a hypothetical. Like, well, what if suddenly we have a single state? But what would that look like?

I guess the state that you're imagining isn't the same state that I'm imagining. And also, you say, basically I'm advocating the destruction of Israel. Well, not the physical destruction of Israel, by any means.

Certainly, it would mean, if there was a return of refugees, if the right of the refugees was respected and they were allowed to return, it would mean the end of Israel as a Jewish state, which I can understand your opposition to that.

But I personally find the idea of a state defined by ethnicity or race to be quite abhorrent.

**FUTERMAN:** Can I answer to that, Tom?

**WOODS:** Yeah, please.

**FUTERMAN:** Well, at least you recognize that there is a monster in the Gaza Strip, so congratulations for that.

**HAMMOND:** Totally.

**FUTERMAN:** Now, of course, you're saying that you would prefer this one-state solution to look like a – I don't know, a free country. I mean, this is like, this is – I mean, there are no words to define it. It is obvious that if the State of Israel disappears, the Jews are going to get murdered, and that's going to be genocide.

I mean, this is not hypothetical. We saw it two weeks ago. What do you think would happen? They would swim in chocolate rivers and drink tea with cookies with Hamas and the like. Of course not. Come on, give me a break.

Now, apart from that, you say that it would be a sort of place where equality before the law. I mean, I talked about the 20% of Israeli citizens who are Arabs. They have exactly the same rights as the Jews. Even more, they don't have to be forced to serve in the IDF, Jews are.

So, I mean, it exists in Israel right now. Now, if you're going to say, well, Israel doesn't withdraw basically its security operations, for example, in Judea and Samaria. Well, in Gaza they have full control, basically, Hamas. But in Judea and Samaria, there are three areas, as you know.

And what do you want Israel to do? To – apart from Gaza – to have another Hamas or theocratic dictatorship in Judea and Samaria, right next to every other Jewish town in Israel? Basically, what you are advocating is for the Jews to commit suicide.

**WOODS:**  Just let me interject here. After Jeremy's response to this, then I'll give Jeremy an opportunity to ask you a question. And then if you both would like to repeat this process, I'll give you, Alan, another chance for another question. So, Jeremy, do you want to respond?

**HAMMOND:** Yeah, sure. So, again, just talking about this hypothetical one state. He's saying what would happen if that could exist, is that the Palestinians would just murder all the Jews.

Well, I think that overlooks that in order for that to ever possibly happen, hypothetically speaking, if that would resolve the legitimate grievances of the Palestinians.

And so, again, he's just looking at it from the point of view of his analysis that the root cause of the conflict is just inherent Arab hatred of Jews. I've already addressed that. That's not the case. They have legitimate grievances. Alan's just refusing to acknowledge them.

And so, that's my response to that. Should I proceed with my question, Tom?

**WOODS:** Please do.

**HAMMOND:** Okay, so first, in your *Wall Street Journal* article, you write that the enemies of Israel aren't in favor of a Palestinian state. They aren't in favor of anything positive.

So, can we deduce from your description of a Palestinian state as a positive idea, that you support the two-state solution, premised upon the applicability of international law to the conflict, as emphasized in UN Resolution 242?

**FUTERMAN:** Well, what we try to make clear in the article is that they are not in favor of building anything. Nothing. So, let's say that there would be a Palestinian state, but if it's going to look like Hamas, then no. The answer is no.

You wouldn't let Nazi Germany to be your neighbor if it intends to destroy you. I mean, anyone reasonable would agree with that proposition. But if it's going to look like Switzerland, be my guest. But I think you and I, we both know it's not going to look like Switzerland because you're seeing it now in the Gaza Strip.

So, that's my answer.

**HAMMOND:** So, it's not going to look like Switzerland, therefore, no.

**FUTERMAN:** No, it's not going to look like a country that's not intending to destroy you and commit genocide to your population. Then, no. That's the answer.

**WOODS:** All right. Alan, would you like to lob another question at Jeremy?

**FUTERMAN:**  Okay. Let me ask you a question, Jeremy. Even if Israel's harshest critics, as you said, recognize that between 7% and 10% of the land of Israel was purchased and homesteaded by Jews, would you have supported the establishment of the State of Israel in those lands?

**HAMMOND:** Well, in the lands that became Israel after 1948?

**FUTERMAN:** In the lands that you yourself said were purchased by Jews?

**HAMMOND:** Well, they weren't contiguous, so that would have been a problem. But yeah, it is something that I think could have possibly been worked out through some kind of political process, without prejudicing, also, the sovereign rights of Palestinians and their property rights and political rights.

That's something that could have been worked out, perhaps. So, I guess my answer is, perhaps. It's something that, again, it's another hypothetical, what could have happened. Certainly, that would have been a favorable solution to what did happen.

**WOODS:** Jeremy, do you want to lob one more at Alan?

**HAMMOND:** Sure. So, you've published a paper with Walter Block and Rafi Farber titled *"The Legal Status of the State of Israel: A Libertarian Approach"*.

In that paper, in defending the means by which the State of Israel was established, you wrote, *"We readily admit that there is no single Jew who can trace his ownership rights over any specific piece of land from 2,000 years ago.*

*And this indeed would be the criterion for the transfer of land titles if we were discussing individual rights. But we are not now doing so, instead, we are discussing tribes, not individuals."*

And then you further admit that by doing so you are, "departing from strict libertarian principles”. So, what do you say to those of us who view your position as irreconcilable with the libertarian principle of non-aggression?

**FUTERMAN:** Well, I think that first you would have to read further. Because then we make the case that some Jews that live today – for example, the Kohanim do descend from the priests that actually built, for example, the Temple Mount.

So, yes, that case could be done. But moreover, what we say later is that the modern state of Israel is founded on land – not all of it, of course – but a lot has been homesteaded by Jews, now, a hundred years ago. So, basically, that's the idea.

Now, I would like to add something regarding what you – because you showed a map. We deal with that map and districts and land in those districts in our book. So, check it out.

But I'm going to make a summary, just a brief summary, of what we say, and why the argument that's embedded in what you're trying to imply is not correct.

That basically, in the Lockean, Rothbardian tradition, legitimate property is the outcome of mixing one's labor with any virgin resource, or homesteading, or trading one's produce. In the case of Israel, it is relevant to note that most of the land before its birth was under control of the British Mandate, which in turn inherited it from the Ottoman Empire.

More importantly, most of the land labeled as owned by Arabs was uncultivated, swampy or desert. So, they had the titles, but it wasn't properly owned under libertarian criteria.

Why? For instance, a survey of Palestine shows that most of the land – by the way, a Survey of Palestine is a source – shows that most of the land regarded as "Arab" was considered, uncultivatable, hence uncultivated.

So, it was not homesteaded. There is no legitimate property without homesteading. If the land is unhomesteaded, it is unowned.

So, basically, what you've just shown, trying to say that most of the land that was owned by Arabs was legitimately owned, and therefore the Zionists didn't have a right to their own property or to establish a state under the property that they had is mistaken.

Just one more point, anti-Zionists try to refute this fact with the assertion that most of the land bought by Jews and Jewish organizations was owned by absentee landowners who sold them and displaced Arab farmers who were actually working the land. And that they are therefore the rightful owners.

On the one hand, this is false, since much of the land sold to Jews was swampy and uninhabitable in the conditions it was received. Moreover, this argument also refutes the original approach.

If one claims that most of the land was owned by Arabs (one based on ownership titles of Arab absentee landowners) then, so, was the sale of these titles legitimate?

In other words, if one asserts that the Arabs owned the land and does so based on titles which one later regards as illegitimate since these were said to be from absentee landowners, then one is engaging in a contradiction.

Either the Arabs owned the land and legitimately sold it to Jews, or they did not own it beyond the few plots worked by Arab peasants. The truth is that most of the land, including most of that said to be a property of Arabs, was uncultivated, swampy, and desert.

So, what I said before, and owned only in a legal sense by the government in charge, that is the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate later. For instance, much of what is now Israel consists of the Negev desert.

Apart from Jews who are now growing many different fruits and vegetables in the area, no homesteading ever took place there.

Moreover, Jews did not buy land from Arab owners because they thought the titles were legitimate, in that they were based on previous homesteading, but because it was the only way to obtain land at the time without being harassed by government.

The primary goal of that of Zionism was to build a state, basically.

**HAMMOND:** Tom, could I briefly follow up?

**WOODS:** Sure. And then what we'll do is, after you do that, we'll wrap up and, Alan, in the course of your few minutes to wrap up, you can respond to Jeremy if you like. I mean, there's no obviously clear way to end this.

So, Jeremy, you can say one final thing and then we'll go into our concluding remarks.

**HAMMOND:** Sure. I just wanted to – because he mentioned the Survey of Palestine. I'm looking at it right now. I'm looking at the table he's referring to of "Uncultivable Land" under the column of "Arabs and other non-Jews".

The title of that graph or table is "The Ownership of Land in Palestine." It's got a column for "Arabs and other non-Jews." And it has got a column for "Jews". And so, the uncultivable land that was owned by Jews (perhaps not under libertarian theory, but according to the Survey of Palestine) was 298,523 dunums.

So, evidently, we were also supposed to believe that the Jews didn't actually have ownership of that land because of the argument we just heard. So, I just wanted to point that out.

**WOODS:** All right. Alan, you can take 3 to 5 minutes, if you like, to sum up the argument, or one final response to Jeremy, whatever you'd like to do with the time.

**FUTERMAN:** Okay. Now, yes, we deal with that in our book, so everyone is invited to read it, particularly chapter seven. I cannot deal with that in three minutes. But basically what I said, it covers it.

Now, it's important to get back to the main issue here, which is basically that Israel is justified in doing whatever it takes to completely destroy Hamas. Now, as it is clear from its own charter, Hamas's goal is genocide.

Its political system is a medieval theocracy, that it tends to kill every freedom and bring death and destruction on anyone who does not support its totalitarian agenda. It is funded by Iran, which seeks to impose a global dictatorship under Islamic law.

Israel is the exact opposite of these maniacs. It is an open society that loves life and defends human dignity. In a fight between civilization and barbarism, any decent human being, especially libertarians and classical liberals whose entire philosophy is based on life and liberty, should side with Israel.

And this implies supporting Israel in its duty to destroy Hamas. I would like to say that there was this old von Mises lecture. I don't remember if it's an essay or a lecture itself. It's called, basically, *"Middle of the road policies lead to socialism."* Something like that.

Well, here in this context, middle of the road positions lead to Hamas, because Hamas is looking for genocide. That's what they are looking for. And just one more thing. Jeremy mentioned before that the war in 1948 was because of Israel, and that's why the Resolution 181 never came to be.

Well, it never came to be, Jeremy, because, you had several Arab armies that went to make war, to build war, wage war against Israel and to kill the Jews, basically. That was their stated goal, not to create any Arab state or any Palestinian-Arab state.

So, basically, that's all I can say about that. And I hope people have a more a clear idea of why Israel is entitled to do whatever it takes to destroy Hamas. Thank you. Tom.

**WOODS:** All right. And Jeremy, final word from you.

**HAMMOND:** Sure. Just to clarify one point there. The reason General Assembly Resolution 181 was not ever implemented is not because the Arab states launched an attack on the Jewish community in Palestine.

It was because the General Assembly had no authority to implement or partition Palestine. It forwarded that recommendation over to the Security Council, where it died. Because the Security Council recognized that it had no authority to partition Palestine against the will of most of its inhabitants.

So, just to clarify that. Coming to the resolution, just to summarize my point. I think it's important that we recognize Palestinians' legitimate grievances, historically and right up to the present.

And only by looking at their legitimate grievances and acknowledging them can we possibly get our analysis correct.

And I think it's unfortunate that so many people criticize and condemn (rightfully so) the crimes of one side or the other. They unfortunately tend to then defend the crimes of the side that they favor. And what I'm saying is that we should be critical and condemn the crimes committed by both sides.

But the case is that we are dealing with a situation where you have an occupier and an occupied people. And the crimes committed by Israel against Palestinians have occurred on incomparably greater scale, starting with the cleansing of Palestine, by which the Jewish State of Israel came into existence.

**WOODS:** All right. And with that, we will declare an end to the discussion today. I want to thank both of you for shedding more light than heat, let's say. For doing what I'm sure some people thought could not be done, which is to have an informed back and forth on this topic.

Let's close with reminding people about the books each of you have written on this subject. So, Alan, you have a book with Walter Block called *The Classical Liberal Case for Israel* that people can find.

Jeremy, you also have a book on this general topic?

**HAMMOND:** *Obstacle to Peace: The US Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.*

**WOODS:** Okay. So, I'll link to these books in the description of the video, and also at TomWoods.com. There it is. Alan's got his book on the screen. *This is The Classical Liberal Case for Israel.*

**WOODS:** *The Classical Liberal Case for Israel*. So, I'll have both of these books linked in the description, and also at TomWoods.com/2408. Thank you both very much.