

Why did israel win the first arab-israeli war



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On May 14 1948, Israel declared its independence as a new state. A war that officially lasted approximately 19 months ended with the Israelis' victorious and proud owners of a legal Jewish homeland. Despite the fact that there is a vast array of sources, especially with the opening of the Israeli and foreign archives, they are all immeasurably biased and all tend to have opposing opinions on nearly every aspect of both the Arab-Israeli conflict and War. A number of factors led to this outcome namely foreign involvement, military strength, impetus, leadership, and the lack of timing and preparation of the invading states.

The first war began as a civil conflict between Palestinian Jews and Arabs following the United Nations recommendation of Nov. 29, 1947, to partition Palestine, then still under British mandate, into an Arab state and a Jewish state. " Though initially Arab guerilla forces, commanded by British officers were succeeding in capturing a number of settlements, including that of Jerusalem, by April the tide had turned and the Haganah seized the offensive and were recapturing areas.

The day after the declaration of Israeli independence heavily supplied military forces from Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia arrived to support the efforts of the Arab Palestinian forces. Foreign involvement was most certainly a highly important factor in the initiation of the first Arab-Israeli war. The UN, US, and British all had they are separate causes for involving themselves in the situation at hand in Palestine.

The UN for peacekeeping purposes, the US and other countries because of the guilt of not having granted European Jews asylum from Hitler during World War II, and the British because they were given Palestine as a

mandate following the first World War. Having initially supported the Jewish Zionist movement as seen in the Balfour declaration, the British slowly shifted their backing to the Arab populace in the area. By 1939 not only had they portioned the land of which Arabs' held the majority, but also " restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine to 75000" over a 5 year period as stated in the White Papers.

This shift in backing could possibly be due to the need for oil of which the Arab nations had lots of as well as the necessity in keeping peace and control of the Suez Canal in Egypt. Having had to deal with an array of violent situations in the British mandate, they had had enough, in 1947 the British " turned the Palestine matter over to the United Nations. The 1947 U. N. Resolution 181 partition plan was to divide the remaining 25% of Palestine into a Jewish Palestinian State and a second Arab Palestinian State (Trans-Jordan being the first) based upon population concentrations.

The Jewish Palestinians accepted... the Arab Palestinians rejected. " Violence broke out " almost immediately after the UN announced partition on November 29, 1947" ; the first Arab-Israeli War had begun. The leading states of the English-speaking world dreaded both an Israeli victory and an Israeli defeat, with the US tilting slightly more in favor of Israel and Britain tilting slightly against. Both governments wanted to avoid a massacre of the Jewish population of course.

But they also wanted to pressure the Israelis to accept something less than the already narrow borders they had been awarded in 1947 In 1947, when the fighting began, the Arab Palestinians and Arab Palestinian forces outnumbered those of the Jewish populace and military forces. Military

numbers and statistics are difficult to gauge and, in this case, are extremely untrustworthy and opinionated. During the initial confrontations, roughly 4,000 trained Haganah and the same number of auxiliary troops were facing 10,000 Arab fighters. Both sides expanded their armies during the war, but by the end, the Arab forces were about 60,000 against 115,000 in the Israeli army, swelled by the rapid immigration of Holocaust survivors” .

Other sources cite different numbers of soldiers. It is clear however that the Israelis had more troops and routed the Arab troops. The fact that the Arab troops were outnumbered and outclassed most certainly led towards Israel winning the war. Following World War II and the genocide of Hitler, the Jewish community was desperately searching for a homeland, a safe shelter.

Having now where else to go, the Jews who had not been granted asylum and had nowhere else to go went to Israel and fought with great incentive. The armies of Israel and all the adult Israelis were on the defensive, they fought with vigor to protect their homes, land, family, religion, and the survival of the Jewish community. Unlike the Israelis who had something to fight for, the soldiers of the Arab League were just that, soldiers fighting for pay and nothing else, no motivation. The need for survival and lack of alternate options for the Israelis triggered the need to win, a need that undoubtedly led them to victory.

A number of outstanding leaders and officials helped in guiding Israel to defeating the invading Arab League. The Jewish community in Israel set up a clear chain of command, for the prime minister down through government, military ranks and the Haganah. On the opposite side, the Arab League had no centralized leadership, no tactical communication and no coordination.

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Initially there were a number of soldier castes, David Ben-Gurion, prime minister and minister of defense set his sights for the Israeli Defense Federation to expand into a unified and highly trained countrywide-armed service.

By disbanding or integrating private military services into the army, Ben-Gurion succeeded in repelling the invading troops from his country. The lack of leadership, communication, and coordination left the Arab troops to fend for themselves. " The Arab Palestinian leadership launched a war they hadn't prepared for against the Jewish community who had been preparing since the Arab revolt. " Though armies were sent the day following Israeli independence, " the Arab states were in no way prepared for war. Their armies were designed for repression at home, not battle beyond their borders.

The lack of training, and preparation on behalf of the Arab League despite being the attackers gave Israel the upper hand towards the success of the defense of the new Jewish homeland. The first Arab-Israeli war ended in an armistice that had placed Israel on the podium. Though in the region of 1% of Israel's total population died (roughly 6, 000), and 7, 000 of the troops of the Arab nations, the victor was still Israel; it had taken more land than was proposed to be given to them, it's own religious based legal country, and had survived attack at it's birth.

Involvement of international countries, well planned out command, large and successful military, incentive to succeed and bad planning on behalf of the Arab League led Israel to win the war in 1947-49 (1948). " The end result of the 1948-49 Israeli War of Independence was the creation of a Jewish State

slightly larger than that which was proposed by the 1947 United Nations Resolution 181. ”