

## SESSION 1

Contributed by webmaster  
Wednesday, 14 May 2008

History of Conflict: Why should we look deeply into the past for understanding the present better?

Keynote speaker: Prof. Dr. Amien Rais There were four lecturers, each lecturer gave their opinion related to the history of conflict in Palestine. The first lecturer was Dr. Salim Nazzal, a Palestinian historian from Norway. He explained that the Zionist project is a corrupt copy of other colonial projects, which occurred in previous periods. The common factor between these colonial projects is the same, the crimes against the native peoples of these countries. What really happened was that the Zionist movement, from the beginning, looked forward to a practically complete dispossession of the indigenous Palestinian population so that Israel could be a wholly Jewish state or as much as was possible. The Palestinians' and other Arabs' opposition to Zionism was never based on anti-Jewishness, as Palestinian and Arab culture has no history of anti-Judaism as Europe has, but rather on a totally reasonable fear of the dispossession of their people. Defining and emphasizing the Israeli Palestinian conflict as a conflict between the native Palestinians and the racist Zionist ideology is essential because the form which any solution takes depend on how the conflict is defined. In the area of conflict theory, we need to differentiate between two types of conflicts, the interest conflict, which can occur on a disputed island or the like, and the value conflict which is a total confrontation on a different level.

The second lecturer was Dr. Rev. Stephen Sizer, the founding member of the Institute for the Study of Christian Zionism (ISCZ), headquartered in UK. He explained that Christian Zionism is essentially Christian support for Zionism. Grace Halsell summarises the message of the Christian Zionist in this way: "every act taken by Israel is orchestrated by God, and should be condoned, supported, and even praised by the rest of us." Whether consciously or otherwise, Christian Zionists subscribe to a religious Jewish agenda best expressed by Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, who claims: "We should not forget ... that the supreme purpose of the ingathering of exiles and the establishment of our State is the building of the Temple. The Temple is at the very top of the pyramid."

Another rabbi, Yisrael Meida, explains the link between politics and theology within Jewish Zionism: "It is all a matter of sovereignty. He who controls the Temple Mount, controls Jerusalem. And He who controls Jerusalem, controls the land of Israel." For the religious Zionist, Jewish or Christian, the three are inextricably linked. The Christian Zionist vision therefore is to work to see all three under exclusive Jewish control since they believe this will lead to blessing for the entire world as nations recognise and respond to what God is seen to be doing in and through Israel. The third lecturer was Dr. Rev. Alex Awad from Bethel Bible College. He stated that he supports and struggles for the freedom and independence of Palestine. This week is the commemoration of 60 years Palestinian suffering during Israel occupation. It also recorded into world history that up until now there is still another form of colonization occurred in this world. From his personal life, the support and struggle of Palestine independence and freedom are not only done by Muslim, but also Christian and another religion which live together and peacefully in Palestine land long before the Israel occupation. Therefore, we need to give back Palestine to their holy land, no matter what.

The fourth lecturer was Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss, the Spokesman of Neturai Karta International, headquartered in US. He clearly explained that Zionist basically doesn't count as a part of Jewish. Jewish spread around the world, but never their religion taught them to seize other lands. The problem is nowadays international public couldn't distinguish the difference between Jewish and Zionist. That's why we need to educate international public regarding this misperception. I also want to persuade Muslim not to call Zionist-Israel with "Jewish" anymore, because along Arabian history the Jewish and Muslim, and as well as other religion, had been lived together and peacefully. After those lecturers, the discussion among participants and lecturers held enthusiastically. Mainly the questions participants ask were about the legitimate and existence of Israel upon Palestine land. Some of them argue that Holocaust was their legitimate to seize Palestine land, while others argue that Jewish, once more, never intended to seize Palestine land, it's only an expansion ideology of Zionist which wanted to make their own country in the land where they believe it's promised by God to them. In conclusion, Zionist is not the part of Jewish, but it is the expansion ideology and movement founded to seize Palestine holy land.