

COMMENTS by viewers in the Zoom Chat of [our webinar](#) ‘What is ODS?’ (on 20 September 2021, Blake Alcott hosting Ghada Karmi and Ramzy Baroud)

with SOME PERSONAL REPLIES by Blake. We will raise these points with our guests in future webinars.

Steve Low: “Rather than REPLACING the State of Israel might it not be more feasible to transform it into one democratic state? Is that not a less-threatening formulation of proposal?” REPLY: 1) Since Israel is in fact and by self-definition a state for only one ethno-religious group, after its ‘transformation’ into a democracy would it still be Israel? 2) *To whom* less threatening? Probably not to Palestinians, virtually 100% of whom have always been against a Jewish state anywhere in Palestine.

Paul Parker recommended Jeff Halper’s recent book *Decolonizing Israel, Liberating Palestine*, which is an argument for ODS.

Jenny gave us the URLs of our Munich Declaration, of the ‘manifesto’ of the One Democratic State Campaign, and the statement of another group called the London One State Group.

David Mandel : “Articulating the ODS goal is fine, a useful counterpoint to the anachronistic two-state mantra and also to the human rights/international law approach of the BNC and much of the solidarity movement, which consciously decline to state and “end game,” as Jeff Halper calls it. But what still seems missing is a concrete plan for achieving this. How do we get there? What strategies do we think will succeed in winning over public opinion among Palestinians, Israeli Jews and through them, policy makers in the world community?”

Henry Lowi : “PFLP seems to still talk about “Palestinian state with its capital at Jerusalem”” Yes, in [this relatively current document](#) the goal, like that of ODS, is sovereignty in all of historic Palestine

Paolina: “As much as and as long as not even basic international and humanitarian laws are taken in any real consideration on the ground, the conversation seems much too remote. How do you think, Ramzy, that any Gazawi would like to have as neighbours an IDF family? How to disregard the life experiences of Palestinians on the ground? And their deep

feelings? How do people think that Israeli would get to share the power, economy, influences, their own imperial policies?” 1) Agreed, it is a huge ask of Palestinians to live with their current oppressors as equal citizens. On the other hand, Palestinians would once again be in possession of over 90% of Palestine’s land, and most likely war criminals would be prosecuted. 2) HOW to ‘get’ Israel to give up? Probably not by talking things over with them and debating Zionism, which has been going on for more than a century while things only get worse. BDS, for example.

Damien: “Not sure Jews and Muslims can live together. Remember India/Pakistan partition (1947); Turkey/Greece exchange of population (1922-1923), etc... Historically Nationalism is linked with religious homogeneity, isn't it?... Remember India/Pakistan partition (1947); Turkey/Greece exchange of population (1922-1923), etc... Historically Nationalism is linked with religious homogeneity, how can Jews and Muslims be an homogenous nation?” As a statement of fact, living together is hard. But ODS is not a statement of fact, but rather a vision of something good, a program. But even factually, before Zionism these groups did live together peacefully. History shows almost no Christian-Moslem or Moslem-Jew fighting in the Near East.

Henry Lowi : 1974 - Fateh “Toward a Democratic Palestine”; Jenny :
“Thanks Henry, that can be downloaded here
<https://www.odsinpalestine.org/reading-and-resources/further-reading/>

Andy Simons : “To Henri Lowi: I don't know of this 1974 Fateh publication. I have a bibliography relevant to ODS and can send to anyone, at jazzyandy@gmail.com”

Steve Low: “It is a myth that the Palestinians will gain a ‘position of strength’ because there is no path to that status. The only alternative to apartheid nuclear-armed Israel is the International Community with leadership by the U.S. As infeasible as that sounds, there's no other realistic option.” Good point. Could be that the International Community will be a necessary part of the change to democracy. Convincing it is the ODS movement’s main job.

Henry Lowi: “In 1974, I was a member of a group of Palestinians and Israelis “on the ground” who advocated “on the ground” for a democratic Palestine, without military occupation, without national oppression, and to which the Palestine refugees may return and live as equals. This view got a great push forward during the 1976 uprising in the West Bank, and on Land Day in the Triangle and Galilee, and then in the Intifada that broke

out in December 1987 — all in opposition to the PLO leadership and Zionism and imperialism.” Tell us more about this, and hats off to you. Why was the PLO against it?