**No government has the right**

[**Dr James J Zogby**](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/dr-james-j-zogby)

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During the past month, Israel has held 800 Palestinians under administrative detention orders, expelled several Palestinians from East Jerusalem, seized more Arab-owned land from areas around Hebron and in the Jordan Valley, and instituted a lockdown of many Palestinian areas during Jewish religious days. This all passed without notice in the US press because such Israeli policies have been routine features of the 55-year-long occupation.

Notably, however, all of these practices violate international law, and all have a disturbing history in Israel/Palestine.

Many were initially instituted by the British to help squash the Great Palestinian Revolt of 1936-1939. Back then, as Palestinian rebels at the peak of their uprising had gained control of significant areas of the country, the British established the “Emergency Military Administration in Palestine.” Under the new regime’s provisions, thousands of Palestinian rebels were arrested and detained without charges, hundreds were expelled, villages were subjected to collective punishment, and Palestinian properties were confiscated and/or destroyed to end the Revolt.

[PEMRA prohibits live coverage of PTIs march](https://www.nation.com.pk/28-Oct-2022/pemra-prohibits-live-coverage-of-ptis-march)

While these repressive measures did play a role, what finally ended the Revolt were false promises by the British to consider Palestinian demands for independence and some Arab leaders’ naïveté, accepting these pledges and urging Palestinian fighters to disarm.

After World War II, facing the new threat of Zionist armed insurgency, Britain reinstated the Emergency Administration—this time directed against the Jewish militias. In response, Jewish leaders were outraged. One noted attorney, Ya’acov Shimshon Shapiro (who later became Israel’s Attorney General and Minister of Justice) criticised these British laws as “unparalleled in any civilized country.”

Formally lifted in 1965, the EDL was resurrected and rehabilitated in 1967—and applied, even more harshly, to the areas of Palestine occupied in the 1967 war. Collective punishment of entire villages was widespread, as was the use of administrative detention. No political parties or expressions of Palestinian national identity were allowed. Well over 1,200 Palestinian leaders— mayors, college presidents, labor leaders, and clergy—were expelled. Substantial areas of Arab-owned land were confiscated, placed under Israeli control as either “green spaces” or “security zones”—off limits to Palestinians, later used for Israeli settlement construction. As Palestinian construction required rarely forthcoming Israeli permission, homes and community buildings were routinely demolished.

[Pakistan capable of defending itself against any aggression: FO](https://www.nation.com.pk/28-Oct-2022/pakistan-capable-of-defending-itself-against-any-aggression-fo)

Even after the Oslo Accords, which Palestinians hoped would lead to an independent state, provisions of the EDL remained in place as accepted legal practice by the Israeli occupation authorities.

Given that these Israeli “laws” have been in place for more than seven decades, it’s perhaps unsurprising that Western media and political leaders have become inured to these Israeli repressive measures. This, however, only adds insult to injury. Palestinians are human beings, deserving of the rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions. Israel’s “security concerns” (like British concerns in the 1930s and 1940s) do not excuse their wholesale trashing of international law and conventions. Nor do they absolve the silence of the West in the face of this total disregard for Palestinian rights. To repeat Israel’s first Attorney General’s words, these laws “destroy the very foundation of justice in this land…no government has the right to pass such laws.”