

# The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East

David Hirst (2003)

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There have been three editions of *The Gun and the Olive Branch*. The first, published in 1977, comprised chapters one to nine. The second, published in 1984, saw the addition of chapters ten to twelve. All, as well as the epilogue to the second edition, have been kept unchanged in this third edition, whose Foreword brings the book up to date. The author invites the reader to look on the Foreword as a short, separate book that is complete in itself but also, he hopes, whets the appetite for the larger history which follows.

For her help and encouragement, I owe a special debt to my very old friend Leila S. Kadi. My thanks are also due to Linda Butler, Michele Esposito and Jeannette Seraphim, of the Institute for Palestine Studies, for their assistance in research; to Carl Bromley, of the Nation publishing house, for proposing a project which I would not otherwise have undertaken; and to Danny Trad, for rescuing it from the near-fatal vicissitudes of a suddenly moribund computer.

#### *About the Author*

Fifty-year resident of Beirut and long-time former Middle East correspondent of the Guardian, David Hirst has lived through or reported on most of the events he describes in *Beware of Small States. The Gun and the Olive Branch*, his seminal history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, was first published in 1977 and updated in new editions in 1984 and 2003.

#### **Front cover**

A MAJOR NEW EDITION OF THE CLASSIC HISTORY OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

'Hirst is a lifelong sympathiser with the Palestinian tragedy and a first-rate reporter who has devoted his life to living in and writing about the Arab world.' *Edward Said*

#### **Back cover**

A myth-breaking general history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, *THE GUN AND THE OLIVE BRANCH* traces events right back to the 1880s to show how Arab violence, although often cruel and fanatical, is a response to the challenge of repeated aggression.

Banned from six Arab countries, kidnapped twice, David Hirst, former Middle East correspondent of the Guardian, is the ideal chronicler of this terrible and seemingly insoluble conflict. The new edition of this 'definitive' (Irish Times) study brings the story right up to-date. Amongst the many topics that are subjected to Hirst's piercing analysis are: the Oslo peace process, the Israeli occupation of the Left Bank and Gaza, the destabilising effect of Jewish settlement in the territories, the second Intifada and the terrifying rise of the suicide bombers, the growing power of the Israel lobby - Jewish and Christian fundamentalist - in the United States, the growth of dissent in Israel and among sections of America's Jewish population, the showdown between Sharon and Arafat and the spectre of nuclear catastrophe that threatens to destroy the region.

'An epic tale . . . . told relentlessly well. If you want to read a account of the price of Zionism, and a sobering review of Israel's new role as conqueror and occupier, then Hirst is your man' *Christopher Hitchens*

'[Hirst's] peerless reporting has earned him curses, expulsion and respect in virtually every country in the region.' *Guardian*

He leaves few of the known skeletons in Israel's cupboard untouched... Massively documented, this book will make uncomfortable reading for many who will no doubt do what they can to discredit him. But they will find it difficult to challenge the integrity of this quizzical and caustic reporter who has an unrivalled record of offending Arab governments and being banned by them,' *Richard Johns, Financial Times*

Middle East. Egypt Iran Iraq Israel Saudi Arabia Syria Browse All Middle East. Russia & FSU. A British journalist's swiftly moving narration of the Arab-Israeli dispute from its origins in the 19th century to the present, written with understanding of and for both sides (though less for Israel) and with stress on the resort to violence which has been the ultimate answer of both to the problem. Enjoy more high-quality articles like this one. Become a subscriber. Paywall-free reading of new articles posted daily online and almost a century of archives. Unlock access to iOS/Android apps to save editions for offline reading. Six issues a year in print, online, and audio editions. Sub 5.0 out of 5 stars Found "The Gun and The Olive Branch" very interesting. I'll read this book again! 22 October 2017. I bought this book, I suppose like most of the other readers here, hoping to glean a better understanding of the historical reasons for the Middle East conflict. I had great hopes for the book after reading an enthusiastic reference to it in a newspaper article. The charge of bias in favour of the Palestinians didn't bother me - after all, isn't the Western media supposed to be controlled by Jews? - so I welcomed the opportunity for an alternative viewpoint. However, when all is said and done, this is a terribly written book (I have the latest 2003 edition). Britain in agony the growth of political violence. Books. Unconditional surrender the roots of a World War II. Books. The roots of National Socialism 1783-1933. Share this Share on twitter Share on facebook. Imperial War Museums home Connect with IWM.

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