

Submission for the RAW (Recycle Apartheid Walls) Prize
by Michelle J. Kinnucan

Architecture and civil engineering are not specialties of mine and so I won't have a lot to say about such technical aspects of recycling the apartheid wall. However, it is clear that the metal in the fencing and the concrete slabs can be recycled using off-the-shelf technology. For instance, according to the Construction Materials Recycling Association, 140 million tons of concrete are recycled in the United States every year (see concreterecycling.org). The obvious uses for the recycled apartheid wall concrete are road and building construction. Parts of the concrete slabs could also probably be used successfully for artificial fishing reefs and related uses in the Mediterranean. Again, the creation of artificial reefs is a well-established practice.

In what follows I want to suggest a conceivably longer-lasting and farther-reaching use for the apartheid walls. I would propose reusing the wall as an educational tool to teach history, political science, and human rights. Specifically, representative sections of the wall should be moved and re-erected, preferably outdoors, to form the centerpieces of museums in eight locations. These museums would all have standard exhibits about the apartheid wall itself, its construction, location, political background, etc. and perhaps, a comparison to the Berlin Wall. Each city would also have unique exhibits particular to that location. These exhibits would not attempt to memorialize the entire Palestinian experience--presumably after Israeli apartheid falls there will be other museums and historic exhibits at sites such as Deir Yassin--but would recount events with special resonance to each location.

Site: Basel, Switzerland

Primary topic(s): Herzl & the First Zionist Congress

Basel was, of course, the site of the First Zionist Congress in 1897. It is also where the Zionist movement first formally set its sights upon Palestine. Museum exhibits in Basel would focus on the congress, the life and work of Theodor Herzl, and the early history of the Zionist movement. A useful subtopic would compare and contrast the Dreyfus Affair as the impetus of Herzl's Zionism with the fact that the affair split French society and Dreyfus was completely exonerated. The idea expressed by Herzl in *Der Judenstaat* that Jewish emancipation, once in place, was irreversible would also figure into this discussion.

Site: Berlin, Germany

Primary topic(s): The world wars, National Socialism, & the Zionist movement

The Zionist quest for a Great Power sponsor in Palestine would be the focus of the Berlin exhibits. Particular attention would be paid to: 1) The Balfour Declaration and the course of WW I; 2) WW I as prelude to the rise of National Socialism and WW II; 3) The history of Zionist collaboration with Hitler's government, e.g. the Haavara/Transfer Agreement; and, 4) The Holocaust Industry and its uses in financing the Zionist project in Palestine and as an ideological cudgel.

Site: Bethlehem, Palestine

Primary topic(s): An-Naksa & Christian Zionism

The Bethlehem site is suggested because it is within the territory captured during an-Naksa, the 1967 war, and is today one of the locations where the Israeli government has erected the wall. There is also its symbolic importance as a pilgrimage site at the place where Christians believe Jesus Christ was born. The main exhibits of the Bethlehem museum would focus on an-Naksa and on the history of Christian Zionism as a departure from the teachings of Jesus and a heresy that misled millions.

Site: Hollywood, USA

Primary topic(s): Cultural representations of Zionism, Arabs, & Israel

The film and television industry have played a powerful role in shaping American, even international, perceptions of the conflict in Palestine and of the parties to it, see e.g. the films *Exodus* and *Cast a Giant Shadow*. The Hollywood exhibits would document how key cultural institutions came under the dominance of pro-Israel partisans and how that impacted their work product and the shaping of popular perceptions of Arabs and Jews. There would also be an exhibit complementary to the Berlin exhibit on the Holocaust Industry, which would focus on film and television representations of The Holocaust.

Site: London, UK

Primary topic(s): Balfour Declaration & Mandate Palestine

The London exhibits would be centered on the Balfour Declaration with three focal points: 1) The history of the Rothschilds, Zionism, and British imperialism; 2) The declaration in the context of WW I; and, 3) The British experience in Palestine with an emphasis on Jewish terrorism against British troops, e.g. the King David Hotel bombing.

Site: Moscow, Russia

Primary topic(s): Russia & Palestine

Historically, Russia is the largest single source of Jewish immigrants (over 1.2 million^{*}) to Palestine. The Moscow exhibits would focus on this complicated history and its relationship to other global events. For instance, as early as 1904, when he financed the Japanese government in its war with Russia, the German-born Jewish American banking magnate Jacob H. Schiff worked to bring about the demise of Czarist Russia. When the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917, Schiff ended the crippling financial embargo he orchestrated against Russia. Significantly, 1917 also marks the year of the Balfour declaration and Schiff's subsequent conversion to Zionism.[†] The USSR would later become the first country to formally recognize Israel in 1948.

Site: New York, USA

Primary topic(s): The United Nations & Palestine

Key subtopics for New York are 1) The UN's 1947 partition resolution and how it violated the founding principles of the organization; 2) The assassination by Jewish terrorists of the UN mediator Folke Bernadotte; and, 3) An exhibit on how and why, for decades, the UN was unable to act decisively against repeated Israeli violations of international law. It may make sense to add another non-UN exhibit that would focus on the pre-WW II Jewish-led boycott against Germany and the role of prominent American Jews in breaking it. This would be complementary to the Haavara exhibit proposed for Berlin.

Site: Washington, DC, USA

Primary topic(s): US Foreign Policy & The Israel Lobby

In Washington, DC, the exhibits would focus on the critically important US role in launching and maintaining the Jewish state with special emphasis on: 1) US entry into WW I and the suppression of the King-Crane commission report; 2) The Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*; 3) The neoconservatives, 9/11, and the US invasion of Iraq; and, 4) A general overview of the Israel Lobby and how it and Zionism were able to dominate American public policy for so long.

It may be that other communities would welcome a section of the wall for their own purposes. For example, Olympia, WA is the home of the slain human rights activist Rachel Corrie. Provision should be made to preserve other sections of the wall for commemorative purposes beyond the ones outlined above.

^{*} See http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Immigration/immigration_by_country.html

[†] See Evyatar Friesel. "American Zionism and American Jewry: An Ideological and Communal Encounter." *American Jewish Archives* (1988) Vol XL. p. 15.