

Observation no: 87 (Arab-Israeli War)

Country-year: Israel 1947

1. Did the current regime come to power in a military coup?

No.

In pre-state Israel, Palestine had been under British mandate since the League of Nations in declared its existence on July 24 1922.¹

2. Has the country ever experienced a military coup?

No.

The state of Israel was established on May 14, 1948 after the United Nations recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, on November 29, 1947.²

3. Is the country's top leader a former military officer?

No.

See answer to question 1.

4. Are ethnic, sectarian, or racial criteria used to exclude segments of the population from the officer corps?

No.

At the time, the Israeli armed forces did not properly exist, as the state of Israel had not been established yet. However, the Haganah, the underground Jewish military organization in pre-state Israel and that was later transformed into the Israeli Defense Forces, recruited exclusively among the Jewish population in Palestine.³

5. Are there strict ideological requirements for entry into the senior officer corps?

¹ Smith, Charles D. *Palestine And The Arab-Israeli Conflict, A history With Documents*, Seventh Edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St Martin's, 2010, p. 103.

² Smith, Charles D, p. 200.

³ Pa'il, Meir. From Hashomer to the Israel Defense Forces: Armed Jewish Defense in Palestine. *Jewish Virtual Library*, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise.
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/pail.html>

No.

However, in pre-state Israel, the Haganah clearly claimed to serve the Jewish people and struggled, under the authority of the World Zionist Organization, for the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel in Palestine.⁴ The Haganah would eventually become the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and the members of the Palmach, one of Israel's pre-state militias and elite fighting forces in the 1940's, would substantially influence the IDF's high command and Israeli politics.⁵

6. Is party membership required for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

However, the Haganah was subordinated to the High Command, the highest Jewish political authority.

7. Does military training involve extensive political education or ideological indoctrination?

No.

However, the recruits of the Haganah were educated for the allegiance to the Jewish people and respect for Jewish values and revival.⁶

8. Has the military been used to repress internal dissent in the last five years?

No.

However, after the end of WWII, the Haganah fought British forces for their anti-Zionist policies.⁷

9. Has the military been used to govern the country in the last five years?

No.

Because the Israeli military was not yet established, there was no Israeli military control of the country from 1942 to 1947. The Haganah was transformed into the

⁴ Pa'il, Meir.

⁵ Cohen, Stuart A. *The Israel Defense Force: Continuity and Change*. In Rubin, Barry & Keaney, Thomas A. *Armed Forces in the Middle East: Politics and Strategy*. BESA Studies in International Security. London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002, p. 180.

⁶ Pa'il, Meir.

⁷ The Haganah. *Jewish Virtual Library*, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise.
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/haganah.html>

regular Israeli Defense Forces after the establishment of the state of Israel by the provisional government on May 26, 1948.⁸

10. Is there a paramilitary organization separate from the regular military, used to provide regime or leader security?

No.

However, while in pre-state Israel there was no proper regular army, the Haganah constituted a non-state paramilitary organization in itself.

11. Is there an internal intelligence apparatus dedicated to watching the regular military?

No.

In pre-state Israel, both the British rulers in Palestine and the Arabs considered the Haganah illegal. There was therefore no regular military to watch.⁹

12. Has a purge of the officer corps occurred in the last five years?

No.

A purge of the officer corps had not occurred because the military was not yet established.

13. Is there an institutionalized forum through which civilian leaders and military officers regularly exchange information?

No.

However, the Haganah did answer directly to the Jewish political leadership in Palestine.

⁸ Pa'il, Meir.

⁹ Pa'il, Meir.