

The idea of population transfe

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As the United States colludes with Israel's right-wing government in undermining a two-state solution with the Palestinians, it may help to revive an alarming idea. With Israel facing an expanding number of Palestinians in the West Bank, and no plan for what to do with them, this may resuscitate the idea of transferring them out of the territories, allowing for a more complete integration of the West Bank into Israel.

To put this in context, this past weekend the US ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, told the New York Times: "Under certain circumstances, I think Israel has the right to retain some, but unlikely all, of the West Bank." Such a move would make a two-state solution impossible, unless the Palestinians were to accept an entirely dependent, quasi-entity, ringed by Israel's army, with none of the attributes of sovereignty.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has long sought to extend Israeli law to parts of the West Bank. However, his annexationist designs could return us to another time in Israel's history, before the declaration of the state in 1948.

During the 1930s, the idea of "transferring" the Palestinian population out of Palestine to make room for Jewish immigration was at the heart of Zionist thinking. Many in the Zionist movement considered that Palestinians could move to fellow Arab countries, without any prejudice to them, as there was no recognition among them of a Palestinian nationalist identity.

A particularly revealing mo-

ment occurred in 1937, when the British Peel Commission proposed the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. The Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion supported the proposals, but understood that they would only be acceptable if there were provisions for the removal of the Palestinians who remained in the Jewish state. Because Arabs represented half the population of that state, unless they were "transferred" they would have quickly formed a majority, owing to their higher birth rate.

If Israel annexes the West Bank, it will have to deal with upwards of what its Civil Administration estimated in 2012 to be some 2.6 million Palestinians in the territory. While they may be penned into areas of Palestinian autonomy, the long-term prospect that relative peace will prevail is difficult to imagine - particularly if Palestinians continue to be denied civil and political rights, and are pushed into increasingly restricted areas, as Israel consolidates and builds up the land under its control.

That is not to say that the Israelis will engage in the mass expulsions of Palestinians. Such scenes would be too reminiscent of ethnic cleansing in places such as Syria and Bosnia, and would bring international condemnation. However, Israel is aware that it is also facing a demographic time bomb and that, sooner or later, the millions of Palestinians under its control may rise up, representing a threat in the West Bank. This is all the more likely if annexation transforms many of its areas into Israel proper.

In such an event, armed



Jewish settlers walk past a market stall on the Palestinian side of the old city market in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron.

clashes between Palestinians and Israelis, particularly if the Palestinian security forces get involved, could lead to dynamics that Israel exploits. Heavy fighting could create major population movements towards safer

areas, perhaps allowing Israel to channel Palestinians into neighbouring Jordan. Certainly, the Israelis would strenuously deny any such intention, but fighting shaped the demographic landscape in 1948. So, why presume

that such a thing could not happen again?

Considering that something might happen is not the same as saying that it will. Israeli society may yet sense where all this is going, and decide that becoming a

rejection hu de has t he is direc ing a

The view that it is in the interest of Israel to obtain the greatest amount of land with the fewest numbers of Palestinians stretches back decades

By bringing the model of a traditional record shop online, Apple kept the idea of owning and keeping songs alive

NICK MARCH

When Apple announced last week that it was killing iTunes, few mourned the application's impending demise. In fact, most critics described it as having become bloated over its long life. In response, Apple will break the existing version down into three parts - music, TV and podcasts - to make it more intuitive and user-friendly.

I was neither an early adopter of iTunes nor an especially late arrival, and, like millions of others around the world, I've now shifted to paying a monthly fee to stream music. Nevertheless, I will miss the idea of iTunes, if not the overgrown mess it became.

When it was launched, two years after the iPod's 2001 unveiling, the iTunes store was envisaged as a rebuttal to peer-to-peer file sharing websites, principally Napster, which had risen to prominence in the free-for-all of the dot-com boom years.

The late Apple boss Steve

Jobs pitched it to a generation of consumers who still lived by the old-world rules that it was better to buy than to rent, and that it was better to do things legally than to hang out with a bunch of internet pirates.

He also gambled that there were millions of music lovers who wanted to replicate the experience of browsing through new albums and spending money, just as they had done for many years in the physical space of a record shop.

"People want to own the music they love," Jobs insisted in 2003. He was right.

Even those of us who had been coerced by the music industry into buying the same music in successive formats - vinyl, cassette, CD and Minidisc - understood that iTunes and the iPod represented an exciting new destination point.

Where Sony's Walkman and its successors had allowed users to take their music wherever they went, they were limited by their inability to carry more than an amuse bouche of the songs a person might want to



Although a digital service, Apple's iTunes was inspired by the ownership of physical music.