

## **Teaching the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. A Curriculum Unit for High School Teachers and Students**

In 1991 UM's Center for Middle East and North African Studies (CMENAS), got a grant from the U.S. Institute for Peace to develop high school curricula on Middle East issues. Betsy Barlow, the energetic outreach director, was instrumental in this. I was a Research Associate at the Center and had been involved in several of their programs so they asked me to create a unit on Teaching the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. There was little available curricular material for teachers, other than by advocacy groups. I was told to think of two weeks in a junior or senior class in world affairs or modern history.

My first task was to narrow down the topic. I decided on five lessons. The first was the historical context. People assume that the Middle East is inherently unstable or that Jews and Arabs have interior pathologies that predispose them to violence. How many times have we heard someone say, "They have been fighting for 2,000 years"? In fact, the age of violence began in the aftermath of World War I when Britain and France partitioned the region and created ethnic regimes which they felt they could control. My first lesson was on the Partition of the Middle East. The second and third lessons were on The Condition of the Jews, including the emergence of Jewish nationalism, and The Condition of the Palestinians, including the emergence of Palestinian nationalism. The fourth lesson was Turning Points, times when the very nature of the conflict changed in some fundamental way: 1947, when Palestine was partitioned; 1967, when Israel captured the Palestinian territories and reunited Palestine; 1977, when Menachem Begin started the settlement programs full bore; and 1987, when the first Intifada proved that the Palestinian territories were ungovernable by outside forces. The final lesson focused on four possible outcomes: the status quo of occupation, a unitary state, two states, and the expulsion of the Palestinians (or the Jews). I pointed out that none of these outcomes was likely, and why. This final lesson asks students to reflect on what might happen, given that none of the outcomes is likely.

All lessons included a short chapter written by me, data, key events, terms, and documents. Assignments ask students to take roles or explain the logic of alternate positions. Two-thirds of the material was in the teacher's section. I knew teachers would feel insecure unless they knew more than the students, so I gave them a lot of

supplementary background information. I listed problems that might emerge and difficult questions that might come up. I told them things not to say and words to avoid. In 1993, the unit was revised and put on the internet. Unfortunately, this step required the removal of the maps included in the printed unit because of possible copyright issues. I have inserted a few of those maps into this Deep Blue version.

The reaction was very positive. The unit was adopted in high schools around the country and in some community colleges. It was even used by some university professors for their own background. And it was used in discussion and study groups. I put my email in and invited users to contact me, so many did. Several Arab groups recommended it, but so did Jewish groups. The very first contact I got after the unit went online was from a teacher in a Jewish day school who was taking a summer class in Israel. The unit had been recommended to the teachers. The Jewish community in Washington, D. C. put it on display, and the Jabotinsky society put the chapter on Zionism on their web site (without my name, which was ok with me). Once when the CMENAS did a National Endowment for the Humanities summer workshop for master teachers on how to incorporate Middle East topics into their classes. two teachers who had used the unit signed up specifically to work with me. I was very pleased. When the unit was new, I got a lot of inquiries and complements, even from overseas. One teenage girl in Belgium wrote to the Center and said, "I want to marry this man!" It was cute. She had been desperate to find material and this was exactly what she needed. I told my friends it was the first internet proposal I had ever received.

The unit had a resurgence when the Iraq war started. Around this time I got a message from a career military officer who found it on the CMENES website and said it had given him insights into the nature of the conflict. This was a decade after its posting.

There were some negative developments. I am sorry to say that some local Jewish leaders fought the unit from the beginning and even met with CMENAS officials to try to get it dropped, but these things happen. I also got caught up in a spit fight between Alan Dershowitz and David Finkelman in which Dershowitz accused my chronology of events as not being based on original research regarding how many Palestinians had died during the Black September Uprising of 1970. Aside: Alan, you

are right. I used standard numbers from standard sources. I did not do my own computation on that. Please don't drag me into your endless wars.

It had been my intention to write a third edition, including the Second Intifada and other significant developments. Over the years I made a running list of additions, subtractions, and corrections to be included in a third edition. But I never got around to that project. Still, even 25 years after its publication, I get an occasional call or email from someone wanting a copy. It is no longer on the CMENAS website but it fills a niche that is otherwise not filled and Deep Blue is a good place for it.

There are three supplementary updates attached to this unit. One is a briefing document on The Palestinian Refugees of 1948. It summarizes some of the data and research and primary source material surrounding that period. Two others are more contemporary, an essay on The Wall, and another on the strategically significant E1 Bloc.

Those who want additional materials relevant to this unit might check some others items that I have on the Deep Blue University of Michigan Virtual Archive:

Walking Between Raindrops: Teaching the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, an article.

Response to Hanan Ashrawi, a talk.

Strategic Options in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, a talk.

A Visit to Jerusalem (notes from 1994 and 2007)

The Death of Yasser Arafat, an essay.

Profile: Reflections on Ariel Sharon, an essay

I have also written several articles, conference papers, essays, and talks on the US political situation. They are also in Deep Blue. See Arab Americans and Muslims in American Politics; The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan; Arab American Political Participation. Presbyterian Divestment debates and actions (Three articles in *Middle East Policy*); and The Status of Muslims in America.

For a deep dive into Arab Americans, you might check *Citizenship and Crisis* by the Detroit Arab American Study Team. This is based on a massive interview project with a representative sample of 1,016 Arab Americans and Chaldeans in the three-county Detroit area. It is the definitive empirical work on that community. I was one of two Principle Investigators.



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USS Liberty

## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

**A Unit for High School Students** by Ronald Stockton, Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Revised second edition, November 1993

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RESTORING OUR CONSCIENCE AND HUMAN VALUES



## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

### A Note to Readers from the Author

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This unit addresses an exceptionally complex subject and one charged with emotion. The signing of an Israel-PLO document in September, 1993 was a breakthrough of historic proportions, but does not end the dispute and does not reduce its significance. This topic will remain relevant well into the foreseeable future.

The unit uses a political approach that views the conflict as a domestic civil war. Other approaches might see it in moral, theological, economic, or international terms. Interestingly, the political approach was used by Israeli and Palestinian leaders at the White House when they spoke of a century-old conflict between the peoples living in the same land.

The unit has three parts.

#### **PART I: OVERVIEW.**

This section introduces the unit to teachers. It explains the goals, philosophy, and strategy of the lessons. It also provides orientation to key terms and phrases that will come up and points out problem areas.

#### **PART II: STUDENT LESSONS.**

For each lesson, there is a text that students should read. There are also appropriate historical documents and data tables, as well as possible discussion topics or assignments. Teachers will decide which assignments to use. Lessons are designed to give a general orientation to the topics and to set the stage for discussions or projects. *Feel free to duplicate these lessons and resource materials for class use.*

#### **PART III: BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS.**

This section provides detailed, concise background on issues raised in the lessons. Most teachers are not specialists in the area and some may feel they do not have sufficient knowledge to teach the unit. Part III attempts to overcome such concerns by providing additional information on each lesson. There are comments on topics that may come up in class, discussions of pressing problems, and accurate information on issues where there is controversy. There is also briefing material on subjects not included in the lessons. For those who want additional information, there are sources offered and a bibliography. There is also a discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement of September, 1993.

Read Part III after reading comparable sections in Part II.

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Readers are invited to send questions, comments, or suggestions to me at 4901 Evergreen Road, Dearborn, Michigan 49126. I would be particularly interested in hearing how the unit works in classrooms. If problems arise, call me at (313) 593-5384.

Ronald R. Stockton, November, 1993

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## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

By Ronald Stockton, Professor of Political Science

University of Michigan-Dearborn  
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### PART II, LESSON ONE: PARTITION AS A POLITICAL TOOL

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It was during World War I that Britain and France decided to partition and control the Arab world. Before then, most of the region was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. To understand what Britain and France did and why their actions produced such bad outcomes, we must go back to the situation before World War I.

At that time, the countries that we know today did not exist so we must think in terms of geographic regions. In the southwest Asian part of the Ottoman Empire there were three such regions. We can call them Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia (or Iraq). Each region had several provinces, and although the Turks governed the whole area, they allowed some of their provinces considerable local autonomy. For example, Mount Lebanon north of Beirut in Syria had been largely self-governing since the 1860s and the province of Kuwait in Mesopotamia had been self-governing even longer.

During the war, Britain and France decided to partition the Arab world and make the various provinces into countries. They did this through the "Mandate" system created after World War I by the League of Nations, which Britain and France controlled. Initially the area was broken into three Mandates: Palestine under Britain, Mesopotamia under Britain, Syria under France. But in the 1920s Syria and Palestine were subdivided, Syria into the countries of Syria and Lebanon, Palestine into the countries of Jordan and Palestine. Also, Kuwait was kept separate from Mesopotamia.

To the south of Mesopotamia the independent Arabian peninsula (whose oil resources had not yet been discovered) was not brought under the mandate system. On the west side of that peninsula was the kingdom of Hejaz, which contained the famous holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Hejaz was ruled by Sherif Hussein of the Hashem family. But elsewhere in Arabia, the dynamic Ibn Saud was working to unite the peninsula under his leadership. Through arms and tribal alliances, Ibn Saud took over most of Arabia and created a country, which he named Saudi Arabia after his family. In the act of uniting so much of Arabia he displaced the Hashemites, who had become allies of Britain during the war.

All of these events left the new Arab states weak and divided and set the stage for subsequent conflict. To see why, we must go back to World War I.

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## WORLD WAR I

This was a war of trenches and artilleries with human losses greater than the world had seen before. By 1918 over 10 million people had died. In 1915, in the Battle of Ypres (in Belgium, to block a German advance into France), Britain lost half of its army of 100,000 and was forced to raise an entirely new army. Also in 1915 Britain using mostly troops from Australia and New Zealand tried to knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war with an attack on Gallipoli south of Istanbul. The attempt was a disaster. In ten months of fighting British forces never got off the beaches. Their total casualties were 25,000. Then in 1916 on the first day of the First Battle of the Marne in France Britain lost another 47,000 lives. The war was going badly.

### The Arab Revolt

Britain had a scheme. The Turkish Ottoman Empire--which was aligned with Germany--was vulnerable because nearly half its population were not Turks. If Britain could persuade the Arabs to rise up against the Turks, they could weaken the Ottoman Empire, divert Turkish soldiers from Europe, and harm the Central Powers. Negotiations began with the Hashemite family of Mecca. The family leader Sherif Hussein was well respected throughout the Arab world. He negotiated with British diplomat Sir Henry McMahon. The revolt began in June, 1916, with Arabs believing Britain had promised a unified Arab kingdom under Hashemite leadership at the end of the war.

## The Russian Revolution

In February, 1917 the Russian Revolution occurred and threatened to take Russia out of the war. (Note: There were two Russian Revolutions in 1917. The famous one in the fall was the Communist Revolution that brought Lenin to power; the one in the spring overthrew the Czar and brought to power a group of non-Communist reformers.) Russian neutrality would allow Germany to concentrate its armies on the Western Front, a disaster for the Allies. This created a panic in the Allied capitals, especially in Britain. They were desperately hoping American would enter the war and that Russia would stay in. Many British leaders were convinced that if Jews spoke up for the war it could make a difference. Starting in 1916 they began negotiating with Jewish leaders, promising British support for a Jewish Homeland in Palestine in exchange for Jewish support for the war. While some British leaders were sympathetic to Jews for humanitarian or cultural reasons, others thought an alliance with Jewish Nationalists (Zionists) would be strategically advantageous. The Balfour Declaration--pledging Britain to support a Jewish "homeland" in Palestine--was issued in late November, 1917.

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## WARTIME STATEMENTS, PLANS AND PROMISES

There are five wartime documents or agreements that are exceptionally helpful in understanding why things went wrong at the end of the war. Clearly, western leaders were not being honest or consistent about their true motives or intentions.

### DeBunsen Report (1915):

Britain had historically backed Turkish control of the Arab world. Now it began to reconsider that policy. The DeBunsen report suggested that Britain should seize Ottoman territory in the Arab world after the war. British interests in India made the Persian Gulf and Iraq prime targets. Iraq was the most valuable place in the region with water, rich soil, and strategic location (also Iraqi oil had just been discovered). From Iraq, there were two ways to reach the sea--the Basra-Kuwait port area and across land to Palestine (particularly the port at Haifa). Britain concluded that these two areas had to be under their control if they were to control Iraq. Other places--such as Lebanon and Syria--were recommended for takeover but were less significant.

### Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (1915):

The British alliance with the Arabs was worked out by Sir Henry McMahon and Sharif Hussein of Mecca. Their letters are controversial because of what was or was not promised. Arabs were convinced Britain had promised a unified Arab kingdom that would include Syria and Palestine. The British claimed Palestine west of the Jordan River had been excluded and that what was promised was just an Arab kingdom. Britain said its promises were fulfilled after the war by making Sharif Hussein's sons rulers in Jordan and Iraq.

### Sykes-Picot Agreements (1916):

Britain and France agreed to divide up the Arab world after the war. These agreements were secret until late 1917 when the Russian Revolution occurred and the Communists released the documents to the public. (The release caused much diplomatic embarrassment since the agreements contradicted other promises.) In short, the Sykes-Picot Agreements led to these results: Britain would get what came to be known as Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine, France would get Syria (including Lebanon), and Russia would get Central Asia (currently independent republics).

### Balfour Declaration (November 1917):



Britain committed itself to a Jewish "national home" in Palestine. It also promised to protect the rights of the non-Jewish inhabitants, including their "civil and religious" rights.

### ● **President Wilson's Fourteen Points (January 1918):**

When America entered the war, President Wilson declared that this was not a war for territory but a war for the principles of peace, justice, and international law. He renounced the secret treaties and called for independence and self-determination for the various peoples then under the control of the Turkish Ottoman Empire and other great powers. Most Arabs assumed President Wilson was speaking for Britain and France.

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## **THE MANDATE SYSTEM**

At the end of the war, the new League of Nations (under the leadership of Britain and France) created the Mandate System. Under this system, conquered lands were placed into one of three categories (A, B, C) and were assigned to a victorious power to govern. The countries of the Arab world were declared to be Level A Mandates, meaning that they were at a very advanced stage of development and would have only a short period of British or French control. Level A Mandates were to be autonomous (self-governing) within a short time and were to choose their own leaders and shape their own destiny. (Mandates of the B and C levels were declared to be less advanced. Most of Africa was in the B category, some small islands in the Pacific were C, meaning that independence was unlikely in the foreseeable future).

● In 1922 Palestine (west of the Jordan River) became a Level A Mandate under British control. (The original draft of the Mandate included Jordan and Palestine in one entity but this was changed in the final 1922 version.) The Mandate agreement specified that there would be a Jewish "homeland" inside of Palestine but that the rights of the native Palestinians would not be affected. These vague and contradictory statements were to cause much trouble.

### **Setting up Governments**

Most Arabs were not happy to be under British and French rule. They much preferred to control their own affairs. In Damascus an independent Syrian government ruled for several months before being overthrown by a French army. In Iraq, Britain needed over 100,000 soldiers and several months of exceptional violence to suppress popular Iraqi resistance. And Sharif Hussein--Britain's ally during the war--was very upset at what he saw as British betrayal, especially in Palestine.

To control the Arab world, Britain and France had two options:

1. Bring armies into the region and rule it by force.
2. Find local allies that could be put in power.

Clearly the second option was better, but the question was how to find such allies. One technique Britain and France had learned while colonizing Africa in the nineteenth century was called "divide-and-rule."

● The strategy was simple: find a local group or leader or ethnic minority that is in conflict with its neighbors, provide them with arms and support, and they will align with you and be loyal to you. In some cases, your ally may be from the majority group and will have popular support. But in many other cases leaders were drawn from ethnic or religious minorities. As a result, new rulers were often unpopular with most citizens, were seen in ethnic or religious terms, and were opposed to anything approaching democracy (except democracy within the ruling group).

Also, since big Arab countries were split into smaller countries, the states that were produced were weaker than need be. For example, when Lebanon was created, France added to the Beirut province several Syrian ports such as Tripoli in the north and Tyre and Sidon in the south. This made Syria weaker by leaving it landlocked and without some of its richest cities; it also left Lebanon weakened since most the Christian areas around Beirut were joined with Muslim areas to the north, south and east. Since the French put the Christians in power so as to control the Muslims, disputes between Christians and Muslims were inevitable.

Governments based on divide-and-rule strategies are seen by the public as representing the interests of one group rather than all the people. They have difficulty ever being accepted. Also, such governments can be easily manipulated by outsiders. If the rulers displease foreign powers, those powers can supply weapons or support to dissident elements within the country and create uprisings. In other words, instability and weakness are built into the very structure of the state.

Britain took members of the Hashemite family from Mecca and installed them as rulers in Iraq and Jordan. While this was not difficult to pull off in Jordan—which was close to Mecca and where the population was largely rural Bedouin—it was a far move from Mecca to Baghdad and was not popular with the more advanced elites of Iraq. Likewise, the introduction of European Jews into Palestine led to exceptional resistance from local Arabs.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON ONE

1. Can you define these words and explain why they are important: partition, divide and rule, mandate.
2. The text mentions several famous cities, particularly Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Mecca. Get an atlas and locate these cities. Choose one city and show how you would get from that city to the other five by land. Will you cross any mountains on any of your trips? If you were in a military convoy that traveled at 30 miles an hour, how long would it take to get from Baghdad to Damascus? How would you get from Britain to Turkey by water? By land?
3. Read the documents included in this section. Do you find conflicts in what the British promised Arabs, French, and Jews? Quote specific passages that you think conflict with other passages, and why you think they conflict.
4. Britain was afraid that if Russia left the war, Germany would concentrate its armies entirely on the Western Front. Locate Britain, France, Germany, and Russia on a map and see if you can figure out what the term "Western Front" means.
5. Churchill felt that if the Battle of Gallipoli were successful, pressure would be eased on the Eastern Front. Can you locate the Ottoman Empire on the map and figure out Churchill's logic?
6. Who were the Hashemites? Where did they rule before World War I? After World War I?
7. Class Project: Break into teams representing Britain, Russia, France, Hashemites, the province of Syria, the province of Palestine, and Zionists. Review the documents and state which one your group prefers as the basis for a settlement. Draw a map that illustrates your proposed solution. Explain to other teams what you want at the end of the war. Can you work out any arrangements that will satisfy all of you?
8. Things to discuss and think about regarding the mandate system:
  1. What do we mean by "colony" and "mandate?" How are they different or similar?
  2. Trace the course of events in the Arab World during World War I up to the establishment of French and British mandates. What role did the League of Nations play? Was the League making decisions based on the common good or was it just a symbolic figurehead for British and French ambition?
  3. To American public opinion, would a League mandate or a British colony over the same area be more acceptable? Why?

9. Extra Credit Assignment: Find a book from before World War I that has a map of the Middle East. Locate the roads that lead between major cities. Some roads in use then do not exist now. Which roads are gone? What do you think happened to them?
10. Thought Question: When Lebanon became an independent state with its expanded borders, Syria lost its major ports. What impact would this loss have on relations between Syria and Lebanon today? (It might help to find a map of Lebanon and see the major ports affected.)

## **PART II, LESSON TWO: THE JEWISH SITUATION AND JEWISH NATIONALISM**

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About a hundred years ago, Jews underwent a major change in how they thought of themselves. At first a few, and then more, began to call themselves Zionists. Zionism is a term that in its broadest and early sense meant simply the "return" of Jews to their ancestral homeland. That homeland was called Zion (or Israel) and its heart was Jerusalem, known as the "city of Zion."

Many early Zionists were simply pious, nonpolitical, religious Jews who felt they could best practice their faith in the Land of Zion. Some went primarily to pray, to study their religious books, and to await the arrival of the Messiah. Politics played little role in their thinking. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, Zionism came to have a political meaning: that Jews were not just a religious or ethnic group but were a nation of people who should have their own state. Today Zionism is the term for Jewish nationalism.

Not all Jews agree upon what Zionism is, but to the extent there is agreement, it is upon three things: there should be a Jewish state; it should be permanent, independent, and secure; and Jews who are threatened anywhere in the world should be able to go there to be safe. All other issues--the boundaries of the state, the nature of government, relations with the Palestinians, relations with American Jews, religious law--are in dispute.

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### **FOUR BACKGROUND FACTORS**

To understand why so many Jews decided to leave their various countries and began to think of themselves as a separate nation, we must look at four factors.

#### **Pogroms:**

In Russian-ruled Eastern Europe a hundred years ago when the Zionist movement began, many Jews were forced to live in a restricted area called the Pale of Settlement. (It included parts of Poland, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Lithuania, and other provinces.) According to the 1887 census there were 2.75 million Jews in this area. Half lived in towns and cities, the rest in villages and hamlets called shtetls by Jews. While some were wealthy, most were poor. From 1881 on, Jews were subjected to attacks and massacres known as pogroms. Many pogroms were secretly instigated by government officials who hoped to solve their unemployment and other problems by driving Jews away. The most famous of these massacres occurred in Kishinev in 1903: 45 Jews were killed, 86 wounded, and 1500 stores and homes were destroyed.

As attacks increased, the first strategy of Jews was to escape. Between 1880 and 1920 approximately 2.5 million Jews fled Eastern Europe, of whom 2 million came to America. Most

American Jews trace their ancestry to those migrants. Below is the rate at which Jews left Eastern Europe during the period before World War I.

Year      Number Leaving Eastern Europe

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1830-70    1,000 -- 4,000 per year

1871-80    8,000 -- 10,000 per year

1881-90    50,000 -- 60,000 per year

1901-14    150,000 -- 160,000 per year

### **The Dreyfus Affair:**

In France in 1894 military intelligence discovered that there was a spy in military headquarters. Since they did not know who the spy was, they decided to blame the only Jew in the office, Captain Alfred Dreyfus. In a rigged trial Dreyfus was charged, found guilty, and sentenced to a long term on Devil's Island. Though he was later released, the trial frightened French Jews, who had previously felt safe in France.

### **Anti-Semitism:**

In Germany and elsewhere in the late 1800s there was a new anti-Jewish doctrine called anti-Semitism. It was different from other forms of anti-Semitism in the past in that it claimed to be "scientific." It declared Jews to be a separate racial group, felt that "all people are governed by racial law," and said that any mixing (either socially or by marriage) was corrupting. By 1879 there was a German Anti-Semitic League that called for discriminatory laws against Jews.

### **The Holocaust:**

The Nazis ruled Germany from 1933-45 and from the beginning persecuted Jews. Starting in 1941 they began a systematic plan to kill all Jews. (They also turned on other groups, such as gypsies, homosexuals, and communists, who did not fit their doctrine of racial and social purity.) This was called the Holocaust. In those years, a third of all the world's Jews were killed, 67% of those in Europe, and over 85% of those in Poland and other areas directly controlled by the Nazis. Such a systematic, cold-blooded effort to exterminate a whole people is called a genocide.

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## **TYPES OF ZIONISM**

Zionism has been interpreted by Jews, inside and outside of Israel, in a variety of ways. Below are five. These views are represented in organizations and political parties in Israel.

### **Refugee Zionism**

Throughout modern history Jews have been assaulted or expelled from their homes. Many people (including many non-Jews) think there is something unique about the Jewish historical experience that made them vulnerable to attack. Certainly we can point to cases where Jews were secure for generations on end, and to times when Jews and non-Jews banded together to prevent anti-Jewish actions. But the fact that Jews went 1900 years without a geographic homeland or self-government or army seemed to contribute to their vulnerability. Many persons have made a simple argument: when Jews are attacked, they should have a place to go to be safe. Hence there should be a Jewish state. In this sense, most Jews are Zionist.

## Socialist or Labor Zionism

Many early Zionists were socialists. Particularly in Russia, they wanted to go to Palestine to create a just socialist society which would be an example to the world. They wanted to create a "working" community of farmers and laborers that would live peacefully with Palestinians. They were particularly interested in farming since in Europe few Jews were farmers. Their descendants are today associated with the Labor Party, the trade unions, and the cooperative farms (called Kibbutzim.) Many support negotiations with Palestinians.

## Religious Zionism

Religious Jews are divided among themselves about the nature and purpose of Israel. For a long time, many were hostile to political Zionism for they saw early leaders as non-religious individuals with no real commitment to Judaism. Even today, several thousand devoutly religious Jews still oppose the very existence of Israel as a "blasphemy" against God. Most religious Jews, however, do not feel this way. Most participate fully in politics. Overall about a third of all Israelis are religious in an Orthodox sense; about 15% vote for various religious parties.

## Ethical Zionism

Many Jewish teachings emphasize concepts of justice. Early in this century Jewish leader Ahad Ha'am taught that Jews should go to Palestine and live in small communities where they would preserve the values of Judaism and serve as an example to others. He said, "I am more concerned about Judaism than about Jews." In the 1940's liberal Jews of this tradition opposed a Jewish state and preferred a "bi-national state" of Jews and Palestinians federated together. The famous teacher Martin Buber and many of his intellectual colleagues held these views.

## Revisionist Zionism

In the 1930s some militant Jews formed military organizations and set out to create a Jewish state by force. The founder of this movement was a highly intelligent, charismatic figure, Vladimir Jabotinsky, who argued against dependence on the British and other international powers to produce a Jewish state; he also argued for the use of armed force against any opponents of Jewish nationalism, including against Arabs. Two of his most ardent followers were Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, both of whom became Prime Ministers and leaders of the Likud party.

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## THEODOR HERZL

The most famous Zionist thinker was Theodor Herzl. He is considered the founding father of modern political Zionism. He was born in 1860 in Budapest and grew up in the sophisticated atmosphere of Vienna. He was not religious. His concern was with Jewish security, the fact that Jews were under attack. In 1896 he wrote a book called *The Jewish State* beginning with a famous phrase: "The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is a very old one: it is the restoration of the Jewish state."

Herzl began his analysis with an assumption: debates about whether there should be a Jewish state must be put aside. Reality speaks for itself:

"No one can deny the gravity of the Jewish situation. Whenever they live in appreciable numbers, Jews are persecuted in greater or lesser measure."

"The decisive factor is our propelling force. And what is that force? The Plight of the Jews."

Herzl asks why these attacks are happening. Jews are attacked whether they are rich or poor, whether they are sophisticated or backward, whether they are educated or illiterate. His conclusion: the cause of tension is not that the Jews have a different religion, or that they hold certain jobs, or that they may wear different kinds of clothes. Tension arises from the fact that Jews are a nation of people living in someone else's country. They cannot be assimilated. The solution is national: Jews must separate and create a state of their own.

"I consider the Jewish question neither a social nor a religious one...It is a national question...We are a people--one people."

Herzl had a strategy for creating a Jewish state. Since those who hate the Jews will be most in favor of creating a Jewish state, he met with anti-Jewish officials in Russia to try to win support for his plan. Herzl said he was not appealing to sympathy or good will but to self-interest. If removing Jews would reduce social tensions (as some European leaders believed), what leader would oppose such a scheme? Herzl felt that in the end the rulers of Europe would support Jewish nationalism even if they did not like Jews.

"I do not aim to arouse sympathy for our course."

"The world needs the Jewish state; therefore it will arise."

Herzl's solution was to create a Jewish state somewhere in the world. He was open as to where the state would be. He considered Argentina, Sinai, and Kenya. Later he settled on Jerusalem to win political support among rabbis and others.

"Let sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe adequate to meet our national requirements, we will attend to the rest."

"Argentina is one of the most fertile countries in the world, extends over a vast area, is sparsely populated, and has a temperate climate. It would be in its own highest interest for the Republic of Argentina to cede us a portion of its territory."

"Palestine is our unforgettable historic homeland. The very name would be a marvelously effective rallying cry."

Herzl felt that the creation of a Jewish state would draw poor Jews from Europe, lead to their revival as healthy, functioning human beings, and produce an immediate drop in anti-Semitism. With a Jewish state in existence, Jews elsewhere would be more likely to live in peace.

"The poorest will go first and cultivate the soil."

"The exodus will thus at the same time be an ascent in class."

"Once we begin to execute the plan, anti-Semitism will cease at once and everywhere."

Herzl emphasized the benefits that would flow to the Ottoman Empire, which controlled Palestine. This weak regime ("The Sick Man of Europe") was bankrupt and badly managed. Herzl met with Ottoman officials and hinted that he could arrange Jewish loans to help refinance the enormous Ottoman debt. He also suggested that Jews would make excellent administrators who could bring order to the chaotic Ottoman administration. Jewish capital would flow into the region, benefiting all.

"We could offer the present authorities enormous advantages, assume part of the public debt, build new thoroughfares, which we ourselves would also require, and do many other things. The very creation of the Jewish State would be beneficial to neighboring lands, since the cultivation of a strip of land increases the values of its surrounding districts."

To the European powers Herzl emphasized the strategic benefits of supporting a Jewish state in the midst of the Arab world. Since Britain was aligned with Turkey, benefits could come to both Britain and Turkey. Since the Jewish state would be dependent upon the West, it would be a reliable ally.

"If His Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could in return undertake the complete management of the finances of Turkey. We should there form a part of a wall of

defense for Europe in Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarism. We should as a neutral state remain in contact with all Europe, which would have to guarantee our existence." Herzl believed that Palestinians would welcome a Jewish state because of the benefits that would flow to them. He also felt that most Arabs were migrants without any ties to the land and could easily move to another place without great loss. In his diary he spoke casually of "spiriting" Arabs across the border. In his novel *The New Land* about the future Jewish state, a European visitor is skeptical about the treatment of Palestinian Arabs. Herzl has a Muslim Palestinian explain how the new state operates and how he and his Jewish friends live together in their common homeland.

"Would you call a man a robber who takes nothing from you but brings you something instead? The Jews have enriched us, why should we be angry with them? They dwell among us like brothers. Why should we not love them? I have never had a better friend among my co-religionists than my friend David Littwak here...He prays in a different house to the God who is above us all. But our houses of worship stand side by side, and I always believe that our prayers, when they rise, mingle somewhere up above, and then continue on their way together until they appear before Our Father."

Herzl created organizations to implement his plans: a bank, a land-purchase organization (Jewish National Fund), and a political organization to link Jews together (World Zionist Organization). These still exist today.

## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON TWO

1. Define these words and explain why they are important: anti-Semitism, Dreyfus Affair, Holocaust, kibbutz, Kishinev massacre, migration, Pale, pogrom, shtetl.
2. Who are the following and why are they important for understanding Zionism: Martin Buber, Menachem Begin, Captain Dreyfus, Ahad Ha'am, Theodor Herzl, Vladimir Jabotinsky. Can you put them in chronological order?
3. On a contemporary atlas can you find where the Pale was? What countries are there today? Have you seen any movies that depict Jewish life in the Pale? *Fiddler on the Roof* is a famous (sad but funny) one that is available on video.
4.
  - a. Write a dialogue between Zionists of two or more different types on the meaning of Zionism. On what would they agree or disagree?
  - b. Organize study teams to represent the various Jewish groups. Have discussions among yourselves about whether there should be a Jewish state, and how it should be organized.
5. Imagine you are a Palestinian who wants to live in peace with Jews. How would you react to Herzl's proposal?
6. Thought Question: When attacks began on Jews in Eastern Europe a hundred years ago, some Jews just stayed out of politics, some fought to change their country through revolution, and some left. Can you make any guesses about the types of Jews who became revolutionaries versus those who left, and those who just tried to stay out of the way? What do you think you would have done?
7. Thought Question: We saw that there were different kinds of Zionists. After reading Theodore Herzl, how would you classify him? What differences of opinion would he have had with other Jews? Herzl is considered the founding Father of Jewish Nationalism. He was from Austria where the life of Jews was not as difficult as in Russia. What explanation can you offer as to why modern Austria, rather than backward Russia, was the home of the founding father of Zionism?
8. Discussion Question: Below are profiles of six Israeli families, all based on real cases. Which do you think would support which kind of Zionism, and why?

## Real People Face Real Problems

Mr. Abu Hatzera moved to Israel from Egypt in 1967, the year Israel defeated Egypt in war. Many Egyptian Jews left that year, out of fear or because they were pressured to go. He runs a small tool and die shop in the suburbs. When he and his wife were visiting the Old City last year, they were attacked by a Palestinian man who stabbed him in the arm with a knife.

Mr. Aaron's parents were from Germany. They were strong believers in the equality of all people, and felt that Jews had an obligation to seek a just settlement with the Palestinians. Mr. Aaron's father was a soldier who died in the 1973 war.

Mr. Barak is from Poland. He was a boy of 12 when World War II ended. He had spent nearly a year in a concentration camp. Both of his parents were killed, as was his sister. He lives in Tel Aviv. The only Palestinians he ever sees are workers.

Mrs. Cohen lives in a small town near the Syrian border. She and her husband own a shop. In 1984 her soldier son was killed in Lebanon. Of her two remaining sons, one is in the army and the other is an anti-war protester who has been arrested twice.

Yair is 19. He lives in a Jewish settlement near Nablus. He has lived there since he was 7. He is now in the military and has been assigned for three months to the Gaza Strip where his unit has almost daily confrontations with Palestinian demonstrators. Last week his mother called and said as the family was driving home from Jerusalem a rock was thrown through their windshield and his younger brother had to have 12 stitches in his face.

Mr. David is an engineer who moved to America seven years ago. He says he left Israel because life there was too hard: his taxes were very high, he had to spend several days a month on military reserve duty, and people spent all their time arguing about the Arabs. He likes America very much and says there is no future for him in Israel.

## PART II, LESSON THREE: FOUR TURNING POINTS

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There are turning points in history when we must go one direction or another, and cannot turn back. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, up to the present time four major turning points have changed the very nature of the conflict.

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### TURNING POINT I: 1947 - THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE

In 1936 Palestinians began what is called the Arab Uprising against British colonial authority. By 1939, 2,287 Arabs, 520 Jews, and 140 Britons had been killed. In 1937, a British government study (the Peel Report) concluded that Jews and Arabs could not live peacefully together in one state and suggested that Britain partition Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab, with Jerusalem a separate city under international control. The report suggested that up to 250,000 Palestinians be removed from the proposed Jewish area. The report was controversial and before anything could be done World War II intervened. As the war ended, Jewish leaders in Palestine began a military campaign to expel Britain. Britain sent nearly 80,000 soldiers to Palestine to control the situation but was not successful.

The Jews were determined to have a Jewish state. They felt this had been promised to them by European leaders, that they were a national people who deserved the right to recreate their



nation in their ancient homeland, and that the Holocaust had shown that without their own state, Jews could be killed anywhere. They vowed that such a thing would never happen again and that only a Jewish state with a Jewish army on a Jewish territory could prevent it. Some Jews wanted to offer citizenship to Muslim and Christian Palestinians but in the end most became refugees and few were allowed to remain. Arabs offered to let Jews live in Palestine as a protected minority but felt they should not have to pay for wrongs done to Jews in Europe by the Nazi government.

In 1947 Britain gave up and turned the question of Palestine over to the newly-created United Nations. In November 1947 the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish (Israel), one Arab (Palestine) with an international enclave in the Jerusalem area, including Bethlehem. Arabs opposed this decision for four reasons: First, 66% of the population was Arab, and Jews held only 6% of the land. Second, Palestinians questioned the legality of Resolution 181 since the British Mandate specified that the opinions of the inhabitants must be taken into account in any decisions. Since 2/3 of the people in Palestine were Arabs, they maintained that the creation of a "Jewish" state against the will of the Arab majority could not be legal. Third, neighboring independent Arab states feared that Israel would be an agent of powerful Western nations that would use it to dominate the region. Finally, Muslims and many Christians (the Catholic Church most prominently) felt that the significance of Palestine and Jerusalem to all three faiths--Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--should be respected.

When the dust settled in January 1949 a Jewish state was in place but the Palestinian Arab state had been stillborn. The declaration of a Jewish state in May 1948 sparked a war. This war was made worse by the determination of Arab leaders to keep Palestine united and to resist a Jewish state, and by the determination of Israelis to expand the size of their state to include part of the proposed Palestinian state.

Three things happened to the Palestinian state. 1) During the fighting Israel captured much of the territory assigned to the Arab state by the UN. The part captured by Israel is today considered part of Israel by most of the world community. 2) Jordan took control of that section of the Arab state called the West Bank. In 1949, Jordan annexed the West Bank and granted full citizenship to the Palestinians therein. While some Palestinians agreed to this arrangement, others were so offended that they became bitter enemies of the Jordanian ruling family. One militant Palestinian assassinated King Abdullah in 1951 and militant Palestinian groups conducted an uprising against King Hussein in 1970. (We will see soon that the West Bank was captured by Israel in 1967 and is today called the Occupied Territories or Occupied Palestine). 3) A small part of Palestinian territory (the Gaza Strip) was held by Egypt. Egypt never annexed Gaza. Israel captured it in 1967. Today it is part of the Occupied Territories.

### **Jewish Population Shifts**

In the next few years, 880,000 Jews came to Israel. Some were refugees from World War II but most were from Arab lands. Some from the Arab world were pious Jews who simply wanted to live in the Holy Land, some were forced to leave by Arab leaders who blamed them for Israeli actions against Palestinians, and some were escaping oppressive governments that abused both Jews and non-Jews. Few Jews from America or Western Europe moved to Israel. The arrival of so many Jews from Arab lands contributed to ethnic tensions in Israel between the Israeli leaders who were mostly from East Europe and the new Jewish majority who were from the Arab world. Even today, Jews from the Arab world are mostly in the working and lower middle classes.

### **The Palestinian Refugees**

The events of 1947-48 created a serious refugee problem. Based on Resolution 181 the Arab state would have 725,000 Arabs and 20,000 Jews; the Jewish state 498,000 Jews and 407,000 Arabs and the international zone (Jerusalem and environs) 100,000 Jews and

105,000 Arabs. In fact, the result was quite different. Not only did Israel end up with 77% of the land of Mandatory Palestine but by the January 1949 Armistice, there had been a major population shift.

Of the Palestinians living in what is now Israel proper on January 1, 1948, approximately 85% were refugees by December 31. Most ended up in Jordan, Gaza or the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, or Kuwait. (During 1948 the population of Jordan more than doubled to 850,000; Jordan also acquired the West Bank which had 400,000 more Palestinians, many also refugees). The UN quickly set up United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to support the refugees. UNRWA settled them into temporary refugee camps in which many live even today. They were certain they could return as soon as the fighting stopped, especially since the UN passed Resolution 194 asserting their right either to return or to be compensated for their loss. Once the refugees realized their return was not imminent, many refused to leave the camps since they did not want to be assimilated into other Arab nations. Also leaving might disrupt social ties, since often villages or families moved en masse into a camp.

In Jordan, all Palestinians received full citizenship. This made Jordan the only Arab country to grant across-the-board citizenship to Palestinians. (Lebanon granted it to many 1948 refugees although not to later refugees. Some Palestinians also obtained citizenship in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere.) Palestinians today are very prominent in Jordanian business and government. Because they are among the most educated people in the Arab world, they have achieved prominence and success in many countries. The Palestinians have been a great economic asset to Jordan.

Today in Jordan perhaps 60% of the 3.5 million citizens are of Palestinian origin (20% of the Palestinians live in refugee camps). In Lebanon, 10% of the population or 400,000 are Palestinian. In the West Bank about 40% are refugees and in tiny Gaza the figure approaches 90%. (A refugee is defined as someone who lived inside Israel before partition and is not allowed by Israel to return. The children and grandchildren of refugees also have refugee status.)

Many Palestinians in the camps are politically militant. They are also very vulnerable to attack. In Jordan in 1970, they led an uprising against King Hussein that came to be known as "Black September" because so many were killed; in Lebanon in 1982 two camps--Sabra and Shatilla--were the scene of brutal massacres that left at least 800 Palestinians dead. (These massacres were carried out by Christian Lebanese forces while the camps were under Israeli army control.) During and after the Gulf War, 90% of those in Kuwait (over 350,000 in 1990) were expelled or forced to leave and were not allowed to return. In the Israeli-occupied territories, over a thousand were killed by Israelis between 1987 and 1992.

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## **TURNING POINT II: 1967 - THE SIX-DAY WAR**

The June War (also called the Six Day War) was a great military victory for Israel but set the stage for increased tensions. There are two interpretations of why this war occurred. One looks to Israeli aggression and the Israeli desire to control Sinai, the West Bank, all of Jerusalem, and the headwaters of the Jordan river in Syria's Golan Province. The second emphasizes Arab aggression, the long-standing refusal to recognize Israel, and repeated attacks conducted across the border by Egyptians, Palestinians, and Syrians. Immediately and specifically it was caused by the Egyptian threat to cut off shipping to Israel through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, and fears of an Egyptian attack that gave Israel the justification for a "pre-emptive" and devastating air and land attack against Egypt and Syria.

The war began when Israeli airplanes destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground. Within a week, Israel had defeated the combined armies of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria (plus smaller units from Iraq and Saudi Arabia). Israel was in control of Egypt's Sinai peninsula, about 2/3 of

Syria's Golan province (commonly called the Golan Heights by Americans), the Palestinian West Bank, Palestinian East Jerusalem, and the Palestinian Gaza Strip. Over 200,000 additional Palestinian refugees had fled or were forced into Jordan.

In one week, the population under Israeli authority went from 16% Palestinian to 36% Palestinian. There is a big difference between the lives of those who are Israeli citizens and those who live under military rule. Those who live in Israel proper had been kept under strict military rule from 1948 until the mid 1960's; today, while not fully equal and discriminated against in many ways, they can vote, join labor unions and organize political parties (so long as they do not question the Jewish nature of the political and legal system).

The situation in the Occupied Territories is very different. Palestinians live under military rule. They cannot vote, cannot join the powerful Histadrut labor union, cannot organize politically, can be detained without charges, can be deported from their country, and can have their property taken for Jewish settlements. (See documents on page 53 and 54 for a discussion of life under occupation.)

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### **TURNING POINT THREE: 1977 - BEGIN BECOMES PRIME MINISTER**

As a result of the 1977 elections, Menachem Begin, leader the Nationalist Likud Party became Prime Minister of Israel. Begin was committed to holding the Occupied Territories permanently and settling them with Jews. He felt the land belonged to the Jewish people and always referred to it by the Biblical names, Judea and Samaria. He began an aggressive settlement campaign that by 1990 had taken for exclusive Jewish use half the land in the West Bank, and a third of Gaza. Israel placed 120,000 Jews in East Jerusalem in areas traditionally Palestinian, and 100,000 more moved to the West Bank and Gaza.

Earlier settlements started under the Labour government had emphasized security. Labour wanted outposts along the Jordan River and on the strategic high points in the West Bank and the Golan province. They avoided settling in the dense population centers of the West Bank and Gaza. In contrast, Likud placed settlements in the very centers of Palestinian population. Settlements were often positioned near cities or on roads. As one Israeli official said, Palestinians are "like cockroaches in a bottle."

Israel also began to place Jewish settlements in the Old City of Jerusalem in areas that had traditionally been reserved for the use of Christians and Muslims. Historically Jerusalem was divided into four "Quarters," one each for Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Armenians (Armenians are Christian but were given a separate quarter for historical reasons). The quarters were created not to discriminate, but to reassure each group that their rights would be respected. If a Jew wanted to live in the Christian Quarter (for example) that person would petition Christian religious leaders for an exemption, with the understanding that if the Jew ever sold the land the Christian leaders would have the right to repurchase the property. The Israeli decision to violate these understandings created tension with Muslim and Christian leaders.

With so much land taken for Jewish settlements, virtually every Palestinian farmer felt personally threatened. Quiet villages became militantly defiant. Concern also increased among neighboring countries that Israel was planning to expel the Palestinians. Statements by militant Israeli leaders--some of them in the cabinet--suggested that this was a possibility. In places like Iraq (which borders on Jordan) there was a sense of impending confrontation with Israel. Direct clashes between Jews and Palestinians also escalated considerably. Both Jews and Palestinians became afraid to go into the others' neighborhoods.

A few years ago, Yehosephat Harkabi, former head of Israeli military intelligence, spoke in Detroit. Harkabi is concerned about what he considers an unstable political situation based on

the population figures noted above. His comments (during the Cold War) are worth reporting. He described the Israeli situation in American terms, saying: "You Americans have the most powerful army in the world. No one can challenge you. But if you had 120 million Russians living in America--all completely loyal to the Soviet Union--your great army would be of no use and you would not be safe. That is our situation. The simple fact is that we must either have a Palestinian state in our neighborhood or we will become a Palestinian state."

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## TURNING POINT IV: 1987 - THE INTIFADA

On December 8, 1987, an Israeli vehicle crashed into a crowd of Palestinians in a Gaza refugee camp, killing four. Palestinians were convinced the accident had been intentional. Israeli police concluded it was an accident with no malicious intent.

In a sense the cause is irrelevant. When political tension reaches a high level a small incident can ignite an uprising. Within days, the whole of Gaza and the West Bank were in a state of rebellion. Military efforts to suppress demonstrations made matters worse. The demonstrations had become a national uprising known as the *Intifada* (the word means "shaking off").

Future historians will see the Intifada as a turning point. It produced new Palestinian leaders from among those living inside the occupied Palestinian territories rather than in exile; it brought rival factions together into an organization called the Unified Leadership of the Uprising; it radicalized many people who had previously been quiet: merchants, intellectuals, villagers, middle classes.

It also produced a major shift in the PLO. In November 1988, the Palestinian National Council (the Palestinian parliament) met in Algiers. After lengthy debate they voted overwhelmingly (85-15%) to accept the partition of Palestine based on UN Resolution 181, to accept Israel, to renounce terrorism, and to call for a negotiated settlement based on UN Resolutions 181 and 242. They also declared Palestine to be an independent state. The US quickly opened up dialogue with the PLO, but broke it off some months later when some Palestinian guerrillas not under PLO control tried to land on a beach near Tel Aviv.

Israel came to realize the costs of occupation: the army spent its time patrolling Palestinian towns; financial costs soared, there were serious US-Israeli tensions; scores of Israeli soldiers protested, and human rights groups criticized Israeli policies. Both Israelis and Palestinians noted increases in spouse abuse, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Among Palestinians, factional fighting left hundreds dead. The Intifada showed that while the Palestinians are not powerful enough to expel the Israelis, they themselves cannot be defeated. The occupation has become costly to both Israelis and Palestinians.

In 1988, as the PLO endorsed negotiations, Israeli voters reelected Yitzhak Shamir and the hard-line Likud Party. It was not until 1992 that Israelis abandoned Likud and elected the more moderate Labor party.

In 1991 the Gulf War occurred and Talks began at Madrid. These talks brought together Israelis, Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, and Lebanese.

## Human Rights Issues

The following figures report on events in the Occupied Territories from the beginning of the Intifada (December 9, 1987) through 1992.

Palestinians killed by Israelis	1,119
Palestinian injuries requiring hospitalization (estimated)	120,446
Palestinians expelled to foreign countries	483
Administrative detentions without charge	15,320
Curfew days*	11,151
Land confiscated (acres)	87,726
Houses demolished or sealed	2,065
Trees uprooted	128,364

- A "Curfew Day" refers to an area with 10,000 or more residents kept under curfew for 24 hours or more. Between January 16 and February 28, 1991 the Occupied Territories were under almost full time curfew. This curfew time is not included.

**Source:** Palestine Human Rights Information Center, Chicago.

According to the Israelis there were also 48 Israelis killed in the Occupied Territories from the beginning of the Intifada-February, 1993: 19 soldiers and 29 civilians. They say 760 Palestinians were killed by other Palestinians through November 1992. Many of these were alleged to be collaborators working for Israeli intelligence.

### Israelis and Palestinians: Populations Figures

Israelis                  Palestinians                  Total

	Israelis	Palestinians	Total
Israeli total (including all of Jerusalem)	4,168,700	921,300	5,090,000
Israel less Jerusalem	3,741,700	762,000	4,512,000
Greater Jerusalem	427,000	151,000	578,000
East Jerusalem	135,000	155,000	284,000
West Jerusalem	294,000	-----	294,000
West Bank	97,000	1,150,000	1,247,000
Gaza	3,600	796,000	799,600

**Source:** Israeli and US Governments

### QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON THREE

1. Discuss these and why they are important: the Arab Revolt, Peel Report, UN Resolution

- 181, UN Resolution 194, UNRWA, Palestinian Occupied Territories, Likud.
2.
    1. Why did Jews want a Jewish state?
    2. Why did Palestinians oppose a Jewish state?
    3. Instead of a Jewish state, what did Palestinians propose?
    4. In 1948 was there an alternative to war? What?
  3.
    1. After 1947 there were significant Jewish population movements. What movements occurred? Did these movements make Jews more secure or less secure?
    2. After 1947 there were significant Palestinian population movements. What movements occurred? Did these movements make Palestinians more secure or less?
    3. Where do Palestinians live today? Find the five largest concentrations.
  4. Discuss the June War of 1967 (The Six Day War). What would you say were the two most significant results of this war? Do you think this war reduced tension or increased it?
  5. What were the Sabra and Shatilla Massacres? The Black September Uprising?
  6. What is the Intifada? What caused it? What do you think would end it?
  7. Can you make a "time line" that shows major events for Britain, Jews, Palestinians, and other Arabs?
  8. The writer says that "when political tension reaches a high level a small incident can ignite an uprising." Do you think this is true? Can you think of any examples?
  9. Extra Credit Assignment: Go to your city library and see how newspapers and newsmagazines covered major events at the time. Look particularly at the creation of Israel, the Palestinian refugees of 1948, Black September, Sabra and Shatilla. Do you think coverage was fair?
  10. Thought Question: In 1948 there was talk of sending American troops into Palestine to restore order. What arguments would people have made for this proposal? Against it? Would most Jews have supported or opposed this proposal? Most Palestinians?
  11. Thought Question: Recent presidents (Carter, Reagan, Bush) have had disagreements with Israel over Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Why do you think these disagreements occurred?
  12. Thought Question: Palestinians who were driven from their homes or who fled during the hostilities of 1948 were not allowed by the government of Israel to return. Why do you think the government of Israel took this position?
  13. Thought Question: In 1987 Palestinians, through the Intifada, got the world's attention. Was there any alternative method that could have captured the world's attention? If so, what was it?
  14. Thought Question: The UN has passed many resolutions urging a two-state solution, repatriation or compensation for refugees, and Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. Why do you think these resolutions have not been enforced? At a time when the world community was insistent that the UN resolutions on Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait be enforced, why do you think the Israeli/Palestinian resolutions have not been enforced?

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## **PART II, LESSON FOUR: THE PALESTINIAN SITUATION AND PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM**

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It is important to understand how Palestinian views have changed over the years. Keep in mind two points as you read. First, people respond to the circumstances in which they live. If you are rich, you see problems one-way; if you are unemployed, you see them a second way; if you own a small shop, you see them a third way. We must understand the circumstances in which Palestinians live if we are to understand their positions and actions.

Second, there are about five million Palestinians. Like Americans, Mexicans, Canadians, and Israelis they disagree on political issues. They also change their minds as new circumstances develop. It is a mistake to think Palestinians have a common view that remains unchanged. As we will see, their view changed considerably over the years.

## **The Palestinian Situation**

In 1948, there were approximately 860,000 Palestinians inside today's Israel. About 700,000 were driven out or fled during the fighting that followed the declaration of Israeli statehood. The Palestinian population of Jerusalem went from 75,000 to 3,500; of Jaffa from 70,000 to 3,600; of Haifa from 71,000 to 2,900; of Lydda-Ramle from 35,000 to 2,000; of Tiberias from 5,300 to zero. All refugees lost their property (about 800,000 acres were taken for Israeli use.). The 160,000 Palestinians still in Israel in 1949 when the fighting stopped lost another 250,000 acres. The Palestinians in Israel were left without resources or strong leaders.

## **Political Evolution**

In the immediate aftermath of 1948, Palestinians took two different paths. One group under a leader named Amin Husseini called for the end of partition and the creation of a secular state in all of Palestine that would include Muslims, Jews, and Christians. A second group living in exile in Jordan agreed to unite the West Bank and East Jerusalem with Jordan to form one country under Jordanian leadership. This was done in 1949. Many Palestinians were so angry at this that they came to view Jordan as an enemy almost as much as Israel. No Arabs recognized the unification with Jordan as a permanent solution, nor did the US. By the early 1950's the Palestinian leaders seemed ineffective and unable to speak for their people.

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## **THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AND BEYOND**

In 1964 the Arab states created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). While it was supposed to represent the Palestinians, it really represented the views of President Nasser of Egypt. Its first leader made wild and irresponsible threats to drive Israelis into the sea. He had little support among Palestinians for he was seen as a puppet of the Egyptians. In the 1960s Palestinian students began to form their own organizations independent of control by Arab governments (although the Syrians, Libyans, and Iraqis continued to fund and control particular groups). Yasser Arafat, an engineering student at the University of Cairo who started a successful engineering firm in Kuwait, founded an independent Palestinian-run party called Fatah. He is said to have the backing, for most of the recent past, of about 80% of the Palestinian people.

In the 1967 war, the Arab armies did very badly against Israel. Palestinians came to believe that if they were ever to have their land, they would have to do it themselves.

In March 1968, 15,000 heavily-armed Israeli soldiers entered Jordan to destroy a Palestinian guerrilla center at Karamah in the Jordan valley. After a day of fierce battle, the guerrillas--under the leadership of Arafat's Fatah--held. The Palestinians had taken big losses but had stood against the Israeli army. For them, this was a major achievement. Overnight, Arafat was a hero. From this point on, he was the principal leader of the Palestinian people.

In 1969 Arafat became chairman of the PLO and changed it into an umbrella organization with membership open to all Palestinian groups. It is headed by a parliament called the Palestine

National Council. Members of the PNC are chosen by their respective groups: students, women, journalists, and military leaders. American Palestinians have four members.

Over the years the PLO has had three different formal positions on the Palestinian-Israeli problem. The first was called the PLO National Charter, adopted in 1964 when the PLO was under Egyptian control; the second was called the Democratic Secular State proposal of 1974; the third is the Palestinian Declaration of Independence of 1988, commonly called the two-state solution.

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## THE PLO CHARTER

The PLO Charter saw Israel as a creation of western colonialism that "conspired and worked to displace" the Palestinians; it says Palestine has a right "to regain its homeland" and the "right of self-defense." The Charter is organized into Articles. Some important ones are listed here.

Article 2: "Palestine with its boundaries at the time of the British Mandate is a regional indivisible unit."

Article 3: "The Palestinian Arab people has the legitimate right to its homeland and is an inseparable part of the Arab Nation. It shares the sufferings and aspirations of the Arab Nation and its struggle for freedom, sovereignty, progress and unity."

Article 12: "Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary goals; each prepares for the attainment of the other. Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine, and the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity. Working for both must go side by side."

Article 13: "The destiny of the Arab Nation and even the essence of Arab existence are firmly tied to the destiny of the Palestine question. From this firm bond stems the effort and struggle of the Arab Nation to liberate Palestine. The people of Palestine assume a vanguard role in achieving this sacred national goal."

Article 6: "Palestinians are those Arab citizens who were living normally in Palestine up to 1947, whether they remained or were expelled. Every child who was born to a Palestinian parent after this date whether in Palestine or outside is a Palestinian."

Article 7: "Jews of Palestinian origin are considered Palestinians if they are willing to live peacefully and loyally in Palestine."

Article 8: "Bringing up Palestinian youth in an Arab and nationalist manner is a fundamental national duty. All means of guidance, education and enlightenment should be utilized to introduce the youth to its homeland in a deep spiritual way that will constantly and firmly bind them together."

Article 15: Under Palestinian rule, "all the holy places would be safeguarded, and the free worship and visit to all will be guaranteed, without any discrimination of race, colour, tongue, or religion."

Article 16: "The liberation of Palestine, from an international viewpoint, is a defensive act necessitated by the demands of self-defense as stated in the charter of the United Nations."

Article 17: "The partitioning of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of Israel are illegal and false regardless of the loss of time, because they were contrary to the wish of the Palestine people and its natural right to its homeland, and in violation of the basic principles embodied in the charter of the United Nations, foremost among which is the right to self-determination."



Article 18: "The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate system and all that has been based upon them are considered fraud. The claims of historic and spiritual ties between Jews and Palestine are not in agreement with the facts of history or with the true basis of statehood. Judaism because it is a divine religion is not a nationality with independent existence. Furthermore the Jews are not one people with an independent personality because they are citizens of the countries to which they belong."

Article 19: "Zionism is a colonialist movement in its inception, aggressive and expansionist in its goals, racist and segregationist in its configurations and fascist in its means and aims. Israel in its capacity as the spearhead of this destructive movement and the pillar for colonialism is a permanent source of tension and turmoil in the Middle East in particular and to the international community in general."

Article 26: The PLO "cooperates with all Arab governments...and does not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab state."

Article 29. "This Charter cannot be amended except by two-third majority of the National Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization in a special session called for this purpose."

### **Analysis of the Charter:**

The Charter says the creation of Israel was illegal because it did not win the consent of the Palestinian people. We will see below that at the Algiers Conference of 1988 the PLO in effect amended the Charter by an 85-15% vote to accept UN Resolution 181 of 1947 which partitioned Palestine and created Israel. Arafat said this vote made the PLO Charter "null and void" (although many Israelis insist that the charter represents the "real" Palestinian position).

Arab Nationalism does not mean all Arabs should have one government. It means Arabs should act together, should be free of foreign control, should be able to shape their own destiny. It says the 170 million Arab people are divided and weak and controlled by outsiders. The PLO Charter supports Arab Nationalism but also Palestinian Nationalism. It sees the liberation of Palestine and the liberation of the Arab people as linked together.

Education is key to Palestinian identity; like Jews, Palestinians believe that education and study are ways to maintain their identity. It is no accident that they have become one of the most educated of all Arab peoples. A major organization of the PLO is the education department, which runs many schools.

Palestinians distinguish between terrorism--attacks on "soft" targets such as civilians--and resistance (attacks on Israeli military or other targets). The PLO has renounced terrorism but affirms the right to resist, noting that such a right is guaranteed in international law. Some militant groups insist on the right to hit any target.

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### **DEMOCRATIC SECULAR STATE PROPOSAL OF 1974**

After the 1967 War, the Palestinian mainstream under Arafat moved towards negotiation with Israel. (The radicals led by George Habash broke with him over this and formed a group called the Rejectionist Front. The Rejectionists aligned with the Soviet Union and radical Arab states, and endorsed the Three No's Policy of 1974: no peace, no negotiation, no recognition. They assassinated Palestinians they suspected of wanting to negotiate.) In 1974, Arafat spoke to the UN. He called for a united Palestine with a secular government that treated all citizens equally and included all Israelis and Palestinians. Arafat said this was his "dream." It is commonly called "The Gun and Olive Branch" speech.

Arafat said there was "a new Palestinian individual" who was looking to the future. "For many

years now, our people has been exposed to the ravages of war, destruction and dispersion. It has paid in the blood of its sons, which cannot ever be compensated. It has borne the burdens of occupation, dispersion, eviction and terror more uninterruptedly than any other people. And yet all this has made our people neither vindictive nor vengeful...." And just as Palestinians deplore attacks on Palestinians "we deplore all those crimes committed against the Jews. We also deplore all the real discrimination suffered by them because of their faith."

Arafat talked of the struggle of Palestinian soldiers then named two fighters, one Jewish, one Christian. Both fight in the cause of justice. The Jewish revolutionary "now languishes in a Zionist prison among his co-believers." And a Catholic Bishop is under arrest so that "all men may live on this land of peace in peace."

Arafat spoke of his "dream" that all lovers of justice--Jew, Muslim, Christian--could live together in the new Palestine. "Why therefore should I not dream and hope? For is not revolution the making real of dreams and hopes? So let us work together that my dream may be fulfilled, that I may return with my people out of exile, there in Palestine to live with this Jewish freedom-fighter and his partners, with this Arab priest and his brothers, in one democratic State where Christian, Jew and Moslem live in justice, equality, fraternity and progress."

"In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution I proclaim before you that when we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination...We offer them the most generous solution, that we might live together in a framework of just peace in our democratic Palestine."

Arafat's ending gave the speech its name. Speaking to the world body, he said: "In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution I appeal to you to accompany our people in its struggle to attain its right to self-determination...to aid our people's return to its homeland from an involuntary exile...I appeal to you to enable our people to establish national independent sovereignty over its own land. Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom-fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. I repeat: do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. War flares up in Palestine, and yet it is in Palestine that peace will be born."

The speech rejected the idea of a Jewish state and did not guarantee the right of Jews living overseas (for example, in America) to go to Israel. The proposal was received with hostility by the Israeli government.

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## TWO-STATE SOLUTION OF 1988

Although many Palestinians, including some PLO leaders, had said for several years that they accepted a "two-state" solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was not until 1988 that a clear official PLO declaration was made. In November the Palestinian National Council met in Algiers and made a revolutionary break with the past. Many Palestinians called it a "Historic Compromise." The Intifada had been going on for almost a year and over 236 Palestinians had been killed, many of them youths. For Palestinians, the fact that so many youths were dying was a powerful impulse to action. In speeches, the "martyrs" were commonly called "The Children of the Stones" (because they threw stones at Israeli soldiers). Most Palestinian groups were at Algiers, even the militants who had boycotted the PLO for over a decade. The proposals before the PNC were revolutionary: accept UN Resolution 181 and the partition of Palestine, accept Israel as a permanent and legitimate state, and renounce terrorism. The debate went on for days. Finally, the resolutions passed by 85% to 15%. The militants were unhappy, but they accepted the result. The US soon opened dialogue with the PLO. This

dialogue was broken off some months later when a militant group associated with the PLO attempted a failed raid on Tel Aviv. While this raid had not been authorized, the PLO was held responsible. Dialogue was not resumed until the fall of 1993.

At Algiers, the PLO also issued a Declaration of Independence. These are its main points:

"Palestine, the land of the three monotheistic religions, is where the Palestinian Arab people was born, on which it grew, developed and excelled. The Palestinian people was never separated from or diminished in its integral bond with Palestine. Thus the Palestinian Arab people ensured for itself an everlasting union between itself, its land and its history... The call went out from the Temple, Church and Mosque that to praise the Creator, to celebrate compassion and peace was indeed the message of Palestine."

The Declaration says international law is on the Palestinian side. Even as enemies created the "falsehood" that "Palestine is a land without a people" international bodies were proclaiming otherwise. The Charter of the League of Nations (1919) affirmed the right of Arab states including Palestine to their independence.

While UN Resolution 181 partitioned the homeland, and led to exile for Palestinians "...yet it is this Resolution that still provides those conditions of international legitimacy that ensure the right of the Palestinian Arab people to sovereignty" since it acknowledges that there should be a Palestinian state as well as a Jewish state.

"Now at last the curtain has been dropped around a whole epoch of prevarication and negation. The Intifada has set siege to the mind of official Israel, which has for too long relied exclusively upon myth and terror to deny Palestinian existence altogether. Because of the Intifada and its revolutionary irreversible impulse, the history of Palestine has there arrived at a decisive juncture."

The PNC declared the existence of a Palestinian state:

"Now by virtue of natural, historical and legal rights, and the sacrifices of successive generations who gave of themselves in defense of the freedom and independence of their homeland;

"In pursuance of Resolutions adopted by Arab Summit Conferences and relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the Resolutions of the United Nations Organization since 1947;

"And in exercise of the Palestinian Arab people of its rights to self-determination, political independence and sovereignty over its territory,

"The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem

"The State of Palestine is the state of Palestinians wherever they may be. The state is for them to enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity, theirs to pursue in it a complete equality of rights. In it will be safeguarded their political and religious convictions and their human dignity by means of parliamentary democratic system of governance, itself based on freedom of expression and the freedom to form parties. The rights of minorities will duly be respected by the majority, as minorities must abide by decisions of the majority. Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights of men or of women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex, under the aegis of a constitution which ensures the rule of law and an independent judiciary. Thus shall these principles allow no departure from Palestine's age-old spiritual and civilization heritage of tolerance and religious coexistence."

"The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the UN Charter and resolutions. Without prejudice to its natural right to defend its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against the territorial integrity of other states."

The Declaration ends with a Sura (chapter) from the Koran, emphasizing that all existence and power are in the hands of God.

"Say: 'O God, Master of the Kingdom, Thou givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt, and seizest the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt, Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand is the good; Thou art powerful over everything."

## Who Opposes the PLO?

There are three main opponents to Yasser Arafat's PLO.

1. On the left various socialist groups think Arafat is too close to business and banking interests and too willing to negotiate with Israel or cooperate with America. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is one of these. It is led by George Habash, a Christian doctor. It opposes any negotiations.
2. On the right some Islamic groups feel the PLO is too willing to cooperate with socialists and is too willing to negotiate with Israel. They feel there should be a united Palestine where Jews could live but which would not be governed by Jews. The largest of these groups is called HAMAS, the Islamic Resistance Movement.
3. Several Palestinian radicals have their own military organizations. Abu Nidal is one of these. He is bitterly and violently opposed to the PLO for what he sees as its moderate positions. He has carried out airplane bombings and attacks on civilians and has tried to assassinate Arafat. He opposes any negotiation with Israel. He is probably funded by Iraq.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON FOUR

1. Where did Palestinians live after 1948? How many were left in Israel? To which countries did they go? With a compass (or a computer), make a pie chart of the Palestinian diaspora. Under the PLO Charter, what was promised to Jews of Palestinian origin? What was promised for all holy places?
2. What or who are the following and why are they significant? FATAH, Amin Hussein, Karamah, Yasser Arafat.
3. The Algiers statement uses the term "self-determination." What does this mean and why is it important?
4. Imagine you are an Israeli who wants to live in peace with Palestinians. How would you react to the Palestinian Declaration of Independence?
5. Break into three Palestinian delegations. One supports the PLO Charter, one the Democratic Secular State proposal, one the Declaration of Independence. Each team should discuss among itself the reasons it supports its position, what advantages would come from its position, and what disadvantages. Teams may want to list their hopes and

plans for the future on butcher paper or poster board. Then the teams should come together, explain their views to each other, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different positions.

6. Thought Question: Discuss the Koranic Sura (chapter) that is quoted in the Declaration. (a) Why do you think the Palestinians included a religious passage in their Declaration of Independence? (b) Does the Sura sound religious to you or political? (c) The Sura uses the word "abase." What does this mean? When Muslims pray they get down on their hands and knees and touch their heads to the ground. This is called abasement. Why do you think they do this? Do you do anything similar in your religion? (d) Do you think it appropriate for political leaders to quote from religious texts in public meetings or documents? Can you think of any similar examples in America?
7. Thought Question: The Palestinian political program changed from the 1974 call for a united democratic, secular state to the 1988 call for two-states: one Jewish, one Palestinian. What factors do you think led to this change? In the meantime, what was happening to Israeli opinion?

### Real People Face Real Problems

As you discuss these options, remember that people see things according to their circumstances: young people are different from their parents, the rich are different from the poor, farmers are different from city people, and those who have suffered personal loss are different from anyone else. Not all Palestinians had the same reaction to the Declaration of Independence. Below are profiles of six Palestinian families based on real cases. Break into six teams with each team representing one of the families. Discuss how you feel about the Declaration and the idea of a two-state solution and then explain why you feel that way to the other teams. Which of you would prefer the PLO Charter or the Democratic Secular State proposal? Which would be willing to accept Israeli and Palestinian states side-by-side? Which would be involved in acts of violence? Would any families just stay out of politics?

Mrs. Talhami, 53 years old, lives in a refugee camp in Lebanon. Most of her village fled together in 1948 and still live in the same corner of the camp. The camp is crowded and life is difficult but they are afraid if they move to nearby towns and break up the village the children will grow up without a sense of who they are. Each home is 30x30 feet, including the courtyard. Today 13 people live in Mrs. Talhani's house including one son, two daughters-in-law, and 9 grandchildren. Her oldest son was killed in an Israeli air raid in 1988. Mrs. Talhani cleans an office after hours. Because her son is unemployed her small income supports the whole family (with some help from the UN). All thirteen people sleep in two bedrooms. There is also a small kitchen which doubles as a bedroom at night. On the wall are pictures of Jerusalem and Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Nasser runs a hotel in East Jerusalem. In recent years his income has fallen nearly 50% as tourists avoid Jerusalem out of fear of the Intifada. He is angry that the Jerusalem city government granted tax rebates to Israeli hotel owners but not to Palestinians. Mr. Nasser's son has lost hope in the future and moved to Brazil.

Mr. Masri is from Nablus. He is a successful businessman in Jordan. His son has a college degree and works for the government. The family have a beautiful house in the suburbs. In his living room there is a picture of a smiling Mr. Masri shaking hands with King Hussein.

Ibrahim is 19. He is unemployed. His father is a farmer near Bethlehem. They grew olives on the farm and grazed sheep on the nearby hill that had been owned by the village for generations. In 1984 the Israeli government took the hill for a Jewish settlement claiming it was public land. Much of the village was impoverished by this. Recently, there have been violent clashes between Jewish settlers and the young men of the village. Ibrahim's brother was shot and is disabled; another brother is in detention although he was never charged with any crime. Ibrahim heard from another detainee that his brother had been tortured.

Mrs. Elias is a teacher in Chicago. Her parents left Gaza in 1974 to start life over in America. She is proud of being an American but is also proud of being Palestinian. Recently her 7-year old daughter came home from school crying because someone had called her a terrorist. The little girl wants to change her name from Jamele to Jennifer so people will not know she is an Arab. Mrs. Elias sends money to her family in Gaza each month.

Mr. Ziad is an engineer. He lived for thirty years in Kuwait and owned a multi-million dollar construction company. After the Gulf war, Kuwait expelled almost all of the 350,000 Palestinians who lived and worked there. Mr. Ziad lost his home, his business, and most of his savings. He and his family now live in Jordan with his brother. He is unemployed.

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## **PART II, LESSON FIVE: POSSIBLE OUTCOMES**

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### **HOW TO STUDY ETHNIC CONFLICTS**

When social scientists study political conflicts (especially those rooted in ethnic differences) they ask certain questions:

First, what is the numerical ratio of the groups? Is it 88-12 (the White-Black ratio in the US) or 60-40 (the Protestant-Catholic ratio in Northern Ireland), or 15-85 (the White-Black ratio in South Africa)? Numbers are very important.

Second, is the minority dominant or subordinate? In South Africa the minority rules; in Northern Ireland the majority rules.

Third, does the minority group live in its own regions or are they spread around? A geographically-based group is a potential nation if it secedes. In Canada, most French speakers live in Quebec; in America, African-Americans are dispersed across the country. These differences affect how the group organizes and how effective it is.

Fourth, are group identities "hard" or "soft"? Some traits are not easy to change, like skin color or religion; others are less firm, such as difference between Northerners and Southerners in America.

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### **THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN SITUATION**

Inside of Israel Jews are a dominant majority of 82:18 percent. In Jerusalem (taking East and West Jerusalem together) Jews lead by a 53:47 ratio. When we add Israel and the Occupied Territories together, including Jerusalem, the proportion becomes 64:36. And since Palestinians have more children on average than Israelis, the ratio would approach 50:50 in time.

To a large extent Jews and Palestinians are geographically concentrated. Most Jews live in Israel and most Palestinians live in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. There are exceptions of course. Many Jews live in the new ring of suburbs around East Jerusalem and in the new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. And many Arabs live inside of Israel, particularly in Galilee, including Nazareth, and in the Negev Desert in the South.

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## FIVE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Let us look down the road 25 years. What could be the outcome of this conflict? Five possibilities come to mind. They are outlined below. Read these carefully and think of the costs and benefits of each. Which do you think is most likely (even if you would not want to see it)? Which outcome would you *like* to see? Which do you think most Israelis would like to see? Most Palestinians?

### Outcome One: Status Quo

At the present time Israel controls all of the territory of Palestine, including the part inhabited mostly by Israelis and the parts inhabited mostly by Palestinians. There is considerable fighting in the Palestinian areas, where the Palestinians are resisting Israeli rule. Israel maintains a very high level of military activity in these occupied areas. The Palestinians seem determined to have their independence, and the Israelis do not seem able to defeat them. Israel has taken much Palestinian land for Jewish use and has placed Jewish settlers inside of the Palestinian territory. The US continues to provide considerable economic, military, and diplomatic support to Israel. The Palestinians are spread around the Arab world and seem unable to challenge Israel in any military sense. While the Arab states make speeches on behalf of the Palestinians they seem unwilling to use their military forces against Israel. For the time being Israel seems capable of defeating any combination of Arab armies.

The Option: The status quo means two things: a) Israel would continue to rule a large Palestinian minority in a non democratic way, and b) Israel would continue to control the land captured in 1967. A variant of the status quo might involve some form of autonomy in which Palestinians would have limited self-government under Israeli authority.

Many Israelis believe this is the most likely outcome. They say there is no reason to think that problems necessarily have solutions. The Irish have fought with the English for hundreds of years. These Israelis say they will simply have to deal with uprisings and revolts indefinitely. Perhaps tension, conflict, and social deterioration are natural in politics.

### Outcome Two: Unification of Lands and Peoples

Would it be possible to unite Israelis and Palestinians into one country with equal rights for all and with a government that favored no religious or ethnic group? America has a government which in theory does not acknowledge religious or racial or ethnic differences. Canada has something similar, with special provisions for the French-speaking people of Quebec. Under this proposal Israel and the Occupied Territories would unite into one country. All Israelis and Palestinians now living on the land would have equal rights, and the government would no longer be "Jewish." Jews and Palestinians living overseas would either have the right to come to the new land or not, but on equal terms for both (probably with some understanding that any refugee or threatened person of Jewish or Palestinian ancestry would be admitted immediately). There might be regional government inside of the country, allowing for regions where Jews or Arabs would be dominant, thus letting the two groups govern their own local affairs (such as education). But the central government would be non-religious and would not differentiate between Jews and Arabs. This was the position of certain Jewish groups and individuals (including Judah Magnes and Martin Buber) in the pre-1948 period and was the PLO Secular State Proposal between 1974 and 1988. It is still the position of some Palestinians and some Israelis.

### Outcome Three: Partition into Two States

In 1947 the UN proposed partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab. The UN assumed that Jews and Palestinians could never live peacefully in a single country and that partition was the only realistic option. In 1988 the PLO endorsed this "two-state solution." Various Israeli parties have also endorsed it, among them Meretz which joined the cabinet in

1992. This outcome would have several advantages: It would give both Israelis and Palestinians their own government and land; it would reduce tensions and allow money to be shifted to human development instead of military use; once there was separation, Israel and Palestine could cooperate economically; and the US would give aid to both sides to make sure the peace worked.

#### **Outcome Four: Expulsion of the Palestinians**

In the 1970's extremist American Rabbi Meir Kahane moved to Israel and formed a political party. He described Arabs as a cancer and vermin that had to be expelled. He said the presence of non-Jews in Israel was a corrupting force that compromised Jewish civilization. His position (not supported by historical evidence) was that Palestinians were not truly a people but were just Jordanians, Syrians, Egyptians, or Lebanese who had come across the border to work. They should go back to where they came from. Although Kahane was assassinated in 1989, today there are two Israeli parties that advocate expulsion of Palestinians. And some public opinion polls say almost 40% of the Israeli public would consider some form of expulsion.

While expulsion would be a radical outcome, there are reasons why it might happen. The Jewish settlements are in place in the Occupied Territories and have taken much of the Palestinian land. They could be used as assault points on the Palestinian population. Also, large numbers of Jews might come from Russia, perhaps a million or more. They could be used to push out the Palestinians. Other efforts to work out a solution might fail. Also if America and other big countries were involved in a war somewhere else (perhaps in Asia or Latin America) expulsion might occur without anyone being able to stop it. Israel's leaders might decide that the threat of an uprising is so great that the dangers of expulsion are less than the dangers of not expelling. Also, some Israelis favor an effort to get Palestinians to leave through economic pressure: denying them jobs or a way to make a living. This is dramatically reducing the ancient Palestinian Christian population, descendants of the people converted to Christianity by the apostles. In the past twenty years the percentage of the Palestinian population that is Christian has fallen from 15% to 3% of the total. If half the Palestinians in the West Bank left and if Gaza were given to Egypt and if 500,000 Russian Jews came to Israel, then the remaining Palestinians would be a much smaller minority who might be kept under control. Israel might then annex the Occupied Territories.

#### **Outcome Five: Elimination of Israel**

Radical Palestinians (such as those in HAMAS) and even some Arabs who are not Palestinian feel that Israel has treated its subjects and its neighbors badly and cannot be trusted. They reject the idea of a Jewish state in the midst of the Arab and Muslim world as something that should not be allowed. These radicals will resist any settlement with Israel. At the present time, they are not in power, but the Arab world stretches from Mauritania to Iran and contains 170 million people. In contrast there are less than four million Israelis. So far, there is only one Arab state (Egypt) that has a peace treaty with Israel. Since 1948 Israel has had wars with all of its neighbors, sometimes with the Arab states attacking first. If at some time in the future, radical governments come to power in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and other countries, the situation could become different from today. If the US were to be involved in a war elsewhere, and if the Arab states were to form a common military alliance, they might defeat and conquer Israel. Many Jews could be forced to flee, with the remainder living under Palestinian rule.

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### **THE ISRAELI-PLO AGREEMENT**

In September, 1993 Israeli leader Rabin and Palestinian leader Arafat met at the White House and shook hands on a historic agreement to end the conflict between their two peoples.

Millions saw it as a breakthrough that would end a hundred-year war between Jews and



Palestinians. Other saw it as a flawed document that would solve nothing.

What do you think? Look at the following summary. Is it close to one of the five outcomes above? Will it solve the conflict? Will it lead to a Palestinian state? Your teacher may want you to read the original document.

**PALESTINE GOVERNMENT:** There will be a Palestinian government with a base in Gaza and Jericho, but with authority over the whole of the occupied territories (with some exceptions). The size of the territory controlled by the Palestinians will increase over time.

**PALESTINE COUNCIL:** There will be an elected council chosen in a free election monitored by international observers. The Document says "In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order."

**WHO CAN VOTE?** All eligible Palestinians, including those who live in East Jerusalem.

**LIMITS ON COUNCIL AUTHORITY:** The council will have authority over all Palestinians in the Occupied Territories but will be temporarily limited in other areas: "Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis."

**ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL:** Israeli troops will withdraw from populated areas. Foreign forces will be brought in for a transition period. There will be no Israeli soldiers around during voting.

**PALESTINIAN POLICE:** There will be "a strong police force." (Why do you think they put in the word "strong"?)

**TRANSITION PERIOD:** There will be five years to work out final arrangements through negotiations. During this time there will be discussions on "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest."

**NEGOTIATIONS BASED ON RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338:** The final outcome "will lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." These proclaim it inadmissible to acquire territory by force and call for Israel's withdrawal. (This is a good time to review those resolutions, especially 242.)

**REFUGEES:** The document makes little provision for refugees except to say that their situation will be discussed in the future. The refugees in Lebanon and Jordan and elsewhere felt betrayed.

**JERUSALEM:** There will be negotiation over Jerusalem. Arafat has said the Palestine government will soon have its capital there. When asked about this, Rabin said if Arafat wanted Jerusalem he could "forget it." Asked about Rabin's comment, Arafat said "He is talking of Jewish Jerusalem, not Arab Jerusalem."

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON FIVE

1. Do you understand the following words and why they are significant: dominant, subordinate, hard and soft identity, ratio, monotheistic, patriarch, conversion, status quo, mobilization, reserve duty, extremist, inevitable, option, vermin, expel, coup.
2. The author outlines five scenarios or outcomes. Has he missed any possibilities?

3. Talk to friends or neighbors who are Jewish or Arab and ask them what they think. Report back to the class.
  4. If you have Jewish or Arab organizations in your town, ask to interview one of their officials. Try to find out what they would like to see as an outcome. (You might find that different organizations on a given side have different perspectives).
  5. It might be interesting to invite Jewish and Arabic leaders to visit your class to discuss their positions. If you do this be sure to invite people from both sides.
  6. Write to Israeli and Palestinian officials at the United Nations and ask them what their position is on negotiations and what outcome they would like to see.
  7. Thought Question: The US is a major world power. We give more than \$3.5 billion dollars a year to Israel in economic and military aid, plus additional subsidized loans. (The grand total in 1993 is estimated at \$6.0 billion.) Should we use our influence to promote one of these outcomes? Which one?
  8. Essay (unit evaluation). Choose one of the five options (or your own solution) and explain why you believe it is the best solution. Explain your position. Will your solution need to be enforced? If so, by whom? Who will pay for the enforcement? Is it fair for everyone, or will it provide the seeds for new problems?
  9. Review the earlier discussion about the different parts of Jerusalem. Is there any way both Jews and Arabs could have their capital in Jerusalem? Do you think sharing or dividing would work? If so, what arrangement?
  10. Do you see any section of the document that supports Rabin's position? Arafat's position?
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USS Liberty

## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is a dangerous and volatile situation that has involved America attention for some decades. It is one of the most difficult and sensitive conflicts you can study. People feel very strongly about it and sometimes get very emotional. If you can learn to state the facts, the history, and the positions of various groups and can learn to think analytically about the subject, you will be well ahead of many others.

To help you study, there are several resources attached.

1. There is a chronology of key dates in the conflict. It is always helpful to be able to structure history in terms of what happened when. Sequence is important in establishing what caused what.
2. Several lessons include documents. It is always good to see authentic first-hand accounts. If you want to know the Israeli position, don't ask the Palestinians, and if you want to know the Palestinian position, don't ask the Israelis. Go to the source.
3. Numbers are important. How many Israelis and Palestinians are there? Where do they live? How many Jewish settlers are there in the Occupied Territories? There are several charts.
4. Pay attention to geography. We Americans tend to overlook it. Remember where the major cities are, where the rivers are, where the mountain ranges are. These help us understand how countries relate to each other.
5. There are discussion topics to help you focus your attention. Your teacher will decide which of these to emphasize.
6. As you study this unit, monitor the news and use it in your classroom. Remember that news reports often follow the most sensational events and seldom give good explanations of what is happening. Read newspapers and watch television to see how they cover events. Look particularly for words or images that are not informing you but are telling you what to think. Remember that anyone who can make you feel anger or fear can control you. Read the news with a skeptical eye, to see if you are being informed or manipulated. Try to find cartoons or editorial page articles that use images of fear or anger or ethnic generalization.

This is a difficult and challenging topic, but one you will find important even after you are out of school.

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Go on to Some Key Dates.  
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## **HUMANITY ON HOLD**

*RESTORING OUR CONSCIENCE AND HUMAN VALUES*





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## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### **PART II, LESSON ONE: PARTITION AS A POLITICAL TOOL**

It was during World War I that Britain and France decided to partition and control the Arab world. Before then, most of the region was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. To understand what Britain and France did and why their actions produced such bad outcomes, we must go back to the situation before World War I.

At that time, the countries that we know today did not exist so we must think in terms of geographic regions. In the southwest Asian part of the Ottoman Empire there were three such regions. We can call them Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia (or Iraq). Each region had several provinces, and although the Turks governed the whole area, they allowed some of their provinces considerable local autonomy. For example, Mount Lebanon north of Beirut in Syria had been largely self-governing since the 1860s and the province of Kuwait in Mesopotamia had been self-governing even longer.

During the war, Britain and France decided to partition the Arab world and make the various provinces into countries. They did this through the "Mandate" system created after World War I by the League of Nations, which Britain and France controlled. Initially the area was broken into three Mandates: Palestine under Britain, Mesopotamia under Britain, Syria under France. But in the 1920s Syria and Palestine were subdivided, Syria into the countries of Syria and Lebanon, Palestine into the countries of Jordan and Palestine. Also, Kuwait was kept separate from Mesopotamia.

To the south of Mesopotamia the independent Arabian peninsula (whose oil resources had not yet been discovered) was not brought under the mandate system. On the west side of that peninsula was the kingdom of Hejaz, which contained the famous holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Hejaz was ruled by Sherif Hussein of the Hashem family. But elsewhere in Arabia, the dynamic Ibn Saud was working to unite the peninsula under his leadership. Through arms and tribal alliances, Ibn Saud took over most of Arabia and created a country which he named Saudi Arabia after his family. In the act of uniting so much of Arabia he displaced the Hashemites, who had become allies of Britain during the war.

All of these events left the new Arab states weak and divided and set the stage for subsequent conflict. To see why, we must go back to World War I.

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## **WORLD WAR I**

This was a war of trenches and artilleries with human losses greater than the world had seen before. By 1918 over 10 million people had died. In 1915, in the Battle of Ypres (in Belgium, to block a German advance into France), Britain lost half of its army of 100,000 and was forced to raise an entirely new army. Also in 1915 Britain using mostly troops from Australia and New Zealand tried to knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war with an attack on Gallipoli south of Istanbul. The attempt was a disaster. In ten months of fighting British forces never got off the beaches. Their total casualties were 25,000. Then in 1916 on the first day of the First Battle of the Marne in France Britain lost another 47,000 lives. The war was going badly.

### **The Arab Revolt**

Britain had a scheme. The Turkish Ottoman Empire--which was aligned with Germany--was vulnerable because nearly half its population were not Turks. If Britain could persuade the Arabs to rise up against the Turks, they could weaken the Ottoman Empire, divert Turkish soldiers from Europe, and harm the Central Powers. Negotiations began with the Hashemite family of Mecca. The family leader Sherif Hussein was well respected throughout the Arab world. He negotiated with British diplomat Sir Henry McMahon. The revolt began in June, 1916, with Arabs believing Britain had promised a unified Arab kingdom under Hashemite leadership at the end of the war.

### **The Russian Revolution**

In February, 1917 the Russian Revolution occurred and threatened to take Russia out of the war. (Note: There were two Russian Revolutions in 1917. The famous one in the fall was the Communist Revolution that brought Lenin to power; the one in the spring overthrew the Czar and brought to power a group of non-Communist reformers.) Russian neutrality would allow Germany to concentrate its armies on the Western Front, a disaster for the Allies. This created a panic in the Allied capitals, especially in Britain. They were desperately hoping American would enter the war and that Russia would stay in. Many British leaders were convinced that if Jews spoke up for the war it could make a difference. Starting in 1916 they began negotiating with Jewish leaders, promising British support for a Jewish Homeland in Palestine in exchange for Jewish support for the war. While some British leaders were sympathetic to Jews for humanitarian or cultural reasons, others thought an alliance with Jewish Nationalists (Zionists) would be strategically advantageous. The Balfour Declaration--pledging Britain to support a Jewish "homeland" in Palestine--was issued in late November, 1917.

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## **WARTIME STATEMENTS, PLANS AND PROMISES**

There are five wartime documents or agreements that are exceptionally helpful in understanding why things went wrong at the end of the war. Clearly, western leaders were not being honest or consistent about their true motives or intentions.

### **DeBunsen Report (1915):**

Britain had historically backed Turkish control of the Arab world. Now it began to reconsider that policy. The DeBunsen report suggested that Britain should seize Ottoman territory in the Arab world after the war. British interests in India made the Persian Gulf and Iraq prime targets. Iraq was the most valuable place in the region with water, rich soil, and strategic location (also Iraqi oil had just been discovered). From Iraq, there were two ways to reach the sea--the Basra-Kuwait port area and across land to Palestine (particularly the port at Haifa). Britain concluded that these two areas had to be under their control if they were to control Iraq. Other places--such as Lebanon and Syria--were recommended for takeover but were less significant.

### **Hussein-McMahon Correspondence (1915):**

The British alliance with the Arabs was worked out by Sir Henry McMahon and Sharif Hussein of Mecca. Their letters are controversial because of what was or was not promised. Arabs were convinced Britain had promised a unified Arab kingdom that would include Syria and Palestine. The British claimed Palestine west of the Jordan River had been excluded and that what was promised was just an Arab kingdom. Britain said its promises were fulfilled after the war by making Sharif Hussein's sons rulers in Jordan and Iraq.

### **Sykes-Picot Agreements (1916):**

Britain and France agreed to divide up the Arab world after the war. These agreements were secret until late 1917 when the Russian Revolution occurred and the Communists released the documents to the public. (The release caused much diplomatic embarrassment since the agreements contradicted other promises.) In short, the Sykes-Picot Agreements led to these results: Britain would get what came to be known as Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine, France would get Syria (including Lebanon), and Russia would get Central Asia (currently independent republics).

### **Balfour Declaration (November 1917):**

Britain committed itself to a Jewish "national home" in Palestine. It also promised to protect the rights of the non-Jewish inhabitants, including their "civil and religious" rights.

### **President Wilson's Fourteen Points (January 1918):**

When America entered the war, President Wilson declared that this was not a war for territory but a war for the principles of peace, justice, and international law. He renounced the secret treaties and called for independence and self-determination for the various peoples then under the control of the Turkish Ottoman Empire and other great powers. Most Arabs assumed President Wilson was speaking for



Britain and France.

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## THE MANDATE SYSTEM

At the end of the war, the new League of Nations (under the leadership of Britain and France) created the Mandate System. Under this system, conquered lands were placed into one of three categories (A, B, C) and were assigned to a victorious power to govern. The countries of the Arab world were declared to be Level A Mandates, meaning that they were at a very advanced stage of development and would have only a short period of British or French control. Level A Mandates were to be autonomous (self-governing) within a short time and were to choose their own leaders and shape their own destiny. (Mandates of the B and C levels were declared to be less advanced. Most of Africa was in the B category, some small islands in the Pacific were C, meaning that independence was unlikely in the foreseeable future).

In 1922 Palestine (west of the Jordan River) became a Level A Mandate under British control. (The original draft of the Mandate included Jordan and Palestine in one entity but this was changed in the final 1922 version.) The Mandate agreement specified that there would be a Jewish "homeland" inside of Palestine but that the rights of the native Palestinians would not be affected. These vague and contradictory statements were to cause much trouble.

### Setting up Governments

Most Arabs were not happy to be under British and French rule. They much preferred to control their own affairs. In Damascus an independent Syrian government ruled for several months before being overthrown by a French army. In Iraq, Britain needed over 100,000 soldiers and several months of exceptional violence to suppress popular Iraqi resistance. And Sharif Hussein--Britain's ally during the war--was very upset at what he saw as British betrayal, especially in Palestine.

To control the Arab world, Britain and France had two options:

1. Bring armies into the region and rule it by force.
2. Find local allies that could be put in power.

Clearly the second option was better, but the question was how to find such allies. One technique Britain and France had learned while colonizing Africa in the nineteenth century was called "divide-and-rule."

The strategy was simple: find a local group or leader or ethnic minority that is in conflict with its neighbors, provide them with arms and support, and they will align with you and be loyal to you. In some cases, your ally may be from the majority group and will have popular support. But in many other cases leaders were drawn from ethnic or religious minorities. As a result, new rulers were often unpopular with most citizens, were seen in ethnic or religious terms, and were opposed to anything approaching democracy (except democracy).

within the ruling group).

Also, since big Arab countries were split into smaller countries, the states that were produced were weaker than need be. For example, when Lebanon was created, France added to the Beirut province several Syrian ports such as Tripoli in the north and Tyre and Sidon in the south. This made Syria weaker by leaving it landlocked and without some of its richest cities; it also left Lebanon weakened since most the Christian areas around Beirut were joined with Muslim areas to the north, south and east. Since the French put the Christians in power so as to control the Muslims, disputes between Christians and Muslims were inevitable.

Governments based on divide-and-rule strategies are seen by the public as representing the interests of one group rather than all the people. They have difficulty ever being accepted. Also, such governments can be easily manipulated by outsiders. If the rulers displease foreign powers, those powers can supply weapons or support to dissident elements within the country and create uprisings. In other words, instability and weakness are built into the very structure of the state.

Britain took members of the Hashemite family from Mecca and installed them as rulers in Iraq and Jordan. While this was not difficult to pull off in Jordan--which was close to Mecca and where the population was largely rural Bedouin--it was a far move from Mecca to Baghdad and was not popular with the more advanced elites of Iraq. Likewise, the introduction of European Jews into Palestine led to exceptional resistance from local Arabs.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON ONE

1. Can you define these words and explain why they are important: partition, divide and rule, mandate.
2. The text mentions several famous cities, particularly Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Mecca. Get an atlas and locate these cities. Choose one city and show how you would get from that city to the other five by land. Will you cross any mountains on any of your trips? If you were in a military convoy that traveled at 30 miles an hour, how long would it take to get from Baghdad to Damascus? How would you get from Britain to Turkey by water? By land?
3. Read the documents included in this section. Do you find conflicts in what the British promised Arabs, French, and Jews? Quote specific passages that you think conflict with other passages, and why you think they conflict.
4. Britain was afraid that if Russia left the war, Germany would concentrate its armies entirely on the Western Front. Locate Britain, France, Germany, and Russia on a map and see if you can figure out what the term "Western Front" means.
5. Churchill felt that if the Battle of Gallipoli were successful,

pressure would be eased on the Eastern Front. Can you locate the Ottoman Empire on the map and figure out Churchill's logic?

6. Who were the Hashemites? Where did they rule before World War I? After World War I?
7. Class Project: Break into teams representing Britain, Russia, France, Hashemites, the province of Syria, the province of Palestine, and Zionists. Review the documents and state which one your group prefers as the basis for a settlement. Draw a map that illustrates your proposed solution. Explain to other teams what you want at the end of the war. Can you work out any arrangements that will satisfy all of you?
8. Things to discuss and think about regarding the mandate system:
  1. What do we mean by "colony" and "mandate?" How are they different or similar?
  2. Trace the course of events in the Arab World during World War I up to the establishment of French and British mandates. What role did the League of Nations play? Was the League making decisions based on the common good or was it just a symbolic figurehead for British and French ambition?
  3. To American public opinion, would a League mandate or a British colony over the same area be more acceptable? Why?
9. Extra Credit Assignment: Find a book from before World War I that has a map of the Middle East. Locate the roads that lead between major cities. Some roads in use then do not exist now. Which roads are gone? What do you think happened to them?
10. Thought Question: When Lebanon became an independent state with its expanded borders, Syria lost its major ports. What impact would this loss have on relations between Syria and Lebanon today? (It might help to find a map of Lebanon and see the major ports affected.)

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Go on to Lesson 2.  
Go back to Key Dates.

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## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART II, LESSON THREE: FOUR TURNING POINTS

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There are turning points in history when we must go one direction or another, and cannot turn back. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, up to the present time four major turning points have changed the very nature of the conflict.

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#### TURNING POINT I: 1947 - THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE

In 1936 Palestinians began what is called the Arab Uprising against British colonial authority. By 1939, 2,287 Arabs, 520 Jews, and 140 Britons had been killed. In 1937, a British government study (the Peel Report) concluded that Jews and Arabs could not live peacefully together in one state and suggested that Britain partition Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab, with Jerusalem a separate city under international control. The report suggested that up to 250,000 Palestinians be removed from the proposed Jewish area. The report was controversial and before anything could be done World War II intervened. As the war ended, Jewish leaders in Palestine began a military campaign to expel Britain. Britain sent nearly 80,000 soldiers to Palestine to control the situation but was not successful.

The Jews were determined to have a Jewish state. They felt this had been promised to them by European leaders, that they were a national people who deserved the right to recreate their nation in their ancient homeland, and that the Holocaust had shown that without their own state, Jews could be killed anywhere. They vowed that such a thing would never happen again and that only a Jewish state with a Jewish army on a Jewish territory could prevent it. Some Jews wanted to offer citizenship to Muslim and Christian Palestinians but in the end most became refugees and few were allowed to remain. Arabs offered to let Jews live in Palestine as a protected minority but felt they should not have to pay for wrongs done to Jews in Europe by the Nazi government.

In 1947 Britain gave up and turned the question of Palestine over to the newly-created United Nations. In November 1947 the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181, partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish (Israel), one Arab (Palestine) with an international enclave in the Jerusalem area, including Bethlehem. Arabs opposed

this decision for four reasons: First, 66% of the population was Arab, and Jews held only 6% of the land. Second, Palestinians questioned the legality of Resolution 181 since the British Mandate specified that the opinions of the inhabitants must be taken into account in any decisions. Since 2/3 of the people in Palestine were Arabs, they maintained that the creation of a "Jewish" state against the will of the Arab majority could not be legal. Third, neighboring independent Arab states feared that Israel would be an agent of powerful Western nations that would use it to dominate the region. Finally, Muslims and many Christians (the Catholic Church most prominently) felt that the significance of Palestine and Jerusalem to all three faiths--Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--should be respected.

When the dust settled in January 1949 a Jewish state was in place but the Palestinian Arab state had been stillborn. The declaration of a Jewish state in May 1948 sparked a war. This war was made worse by the determination of Arab leaders to keep Palestine united and to resist a Jewish state, and by the determination of Israelis to expand the size of their state to include part of the proposed Palestinian state.

Three things happened to the Palestinian state. 1) During the fighting Israel captured much of the territory assigned to the Arab state by the UN. The part captured by Israel is today considered part of Israel by most of the world community. 2) Jordan took control of that section of the Arab state called the West Bank. In 1949, Jordan annexed the West Bank and granted full citizenship to the Palestinians therein. While some Palestinians agreed to this arrangement, others were so offended that they became bitter enemies of the Jordanian ruling family. One militant Palestinian assassinated King Abdullah in 1951 and militant Palestinian groups conducted an uprising against King Hussein in 1970. (We will see soon that the West Bank was captured by Israel in 1967 and is today called the Occupied Territories or Occupied Palestine). 3) A small part of Palestinian territory (the Gaza Strip) was held by Egypt. Egypt never annexed Gaza. Israel captured it in 1967. Today it is part of the Occupied Territories.

### **Jewish Population Shifts**

In the next few years, 880,000 Jews came to Israel. Some were refugees from World War II but most were from Arab lands. Some from the Arab world were pious Jews who simply wanted to live in the Holy Land, some were forced to leave by Arab leaders who blamed them for Israeli actions against Palestinians, and some were escaping oppressive governments that abused both Jews and non-Jews. Few Jews from America or Western Europe moved to Israel. The arrival of so many Jews from Arab lands contributed to ethnic tensions in Israel between the Israeli leaders who were mostly from East Europe and the new Jewish majority who were from the Arab world. Even today, Jews from the Arab world are mostly in the working and lower middle classes.

### **The Palestinian Refugees**

The events of 1947-48 created a serious refugee problem. Based on Resolution 181 the Arab state would have 725,000 Arabs and 20,000 Jews; the Jewish state 498,000 Jews and 407,000 Arabs and the international zone (Jerusalem and environs) 100,000 Jews and

105,000 Arabs. In fact, the result was quite different. Not only did Israel end up with 77% of the land of Mandatory Palestine but by the January 1949 Armistice, there had been a major population shift.

Of the Palestinians living in what is now Israel proper on January 1, 1948, approximately 85% were refugees by December 31. Most ended up in Jordan, Gaza or the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, or Kuwait. (During 1948 the population of Jordan more than doubled to 850,000; Jordan also acquired the West Bank which had 400,000 more Palestinians, many also refugees). The UN quickly set up United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to support the refugees. UNRWA settled them into temporary refugee camps in which many live even today. They were certain they could return as soon as the fighting stopped, especially since the UN passed Resolution 194 asserting their right either to return or to be compensated for their loss. Once the refugees realized their return was not imminent, many refused to leave the camps since they did not want to be assimilated into other Arab nations. Also leaving might disrupt social ties, since often villages or families moved en masse into a camp.

In Jordan, all Palestinians received full citizenship. This made Jordan the only Arab country to grant across-the-board citizenship to Palestinians. (Lebanon granted it to many 1948 refugees although not to later refugees. Some Palestinians also obtained citizenship in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere.) Palestinians today are very prominent in Jordanian business and government. Because they are among the most educated people in the Arab world, they have achieved prominence and success in many countries. The Palestinians have been a great economic asset to Jordan.

Today in Jordan perhaps 60% of the 3.5 million citizens are of Palestinian origin (20% of the Palestinians live in refugee camps). In Lebanon, 10% of the population or 400,000 are Palestinian. In the West Bank about 40% are refugees and in tiny Gaza the figure approaches 90%. (A refugee is defined as someone who lived inside Israel before partition and is not allowed by Israel to return. The children and grandchildren of refugees also have refugee status.)

Many Palestinians in the camps are politically militant. They are also very vulnerable to attack. In Jordan in 1970, they led an uprising against King Hussein that came to be known as "Black September" because so many were killed; in Lebanon in 1982 two camps--Sabra and Shatilla--were the scene of brutal massacres that left at least 800 Palestinians dead. (These massacres were carried out by Christian Lebanese forces while the camps were under Israeli army control.) During and after the Gulf War, 90% of those in Kuwait (over 350,000 in 1990) were expelled or forced to leave and were not allowed to return. In the Israeli-occupied territories, over a thousand were killed by Israelis between 1987 and 1992.

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## **TURNING POINT II: 1967 - THE SIX-DAY WAR**

The June War (also called the Six Day War) was a great military victory for Israel but set the stage for increased tensions. There are two interpretations of why this war occurred. One looks to Israeli aggression and the Israeli desire to control Sinai, the West Bank, all of

Jerusalem, and the headwaters of the Jordan river in Syria's Golan Province. The second emphasizes Arab aggression, the long-standing refusal to recognize Israel, and repeated attacks conducted across the border by Egyptians, Palestinians, and Syrians. Immediately and specifically it was caused by the Egyptian threat to cut off shipping to Israel through the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, and fears of an Egyptian attack that gave Israel the justification for a "pre-emptive" and devastating air and land attack against Egypt and Syria.

The war began when Israeli airplanes destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground. Within a week, Israel had defeated the combined armies of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria (plus smaller units from Iraq and Saudi Arabia). Israel was in control of Egypt's Sinai peninsula, about 2/3 of Syria's Golan province (commonly called the Golan Heights by Americans), the Palestinian West Bank, Palestinian East Jerusalem, and the Palestinian Gaza Strip. Over 200,000 additional Palestinian refugees had fled or were forced into Jordan.

In one week, the population under Israeli authority went from 16% Palestinian to 36% Palestinian. There is a big difference between the lives of those who are Israeli citizens and those who live under military rule. Those who live in Israel proper had been kept under strict military rule from 1948 until the mid 1960's; today, while not fully equal and discriminated against in many ways, they can vote, join labor unions and organize political parties (so long as they do not question the Jewish nature of the political and legal system).

The situation in the Occupied Territories is very different. Palestinians live under military rule. They cannot vote, cannot join the powerful Histadrut labor union, cannot organize politically, can be detained without charges, can be deported from their country, and can have their property taken for Jewish settlements. (See documents on page 53 and 54 for a discussion of life under occupation.)

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### **TURNING POINT THREE: 1977 - BEGIN BECOMES PRIME MINISTER**

As a result of the 1977 elections, Menachem Begin, leader the Nationalist Likud Party became Prime Minister of Israel. Begin was committed to holding the Occupied Territories permanently and settling them with Jews. He felt the land belonged to the Jewish people and always referred to it by the Biblical names, Judea and Samaria. He began an aggressive settlement campaign that by 1990 had taken for exclusive Jewish use half the land in the West Bank, and a third of Gaza. Israel placed 120,000 Jews in East Jerusalem in areas traditionally Palestinian, and 100,000 more moved to the West Bank and Gaza.

Earlier settlements started under the Labour government had emphasized security. Labour wanted outposts along the Jordan River and on the strategic high points in the West Bank and the Golan province. They avoided settling in the dense population centers of the West Bank and Gaza. In contrast, Likud placed settlements in the very centers of Palestinian population. Settlements were often positioned near cities or on roads. As one Israeli official said, Palestinians are "like cockroaches in a bottle."

Israel also began to place Jewish settlements in the Old City of Jerusalem in areas that had traditionally been reserved for the use of Christians and Muslims. Historically Jerusalem was divided into four "Quarters," one each for Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Armenians (Armenians are Christian but were given a separate quarter for historical reasons). The quarters were created not to discriminate, but to reassure each group that their rights would be respected. If a Jew wanted to live in the Christian Quarter (for example) that person would petition Christian religious leaders for an exemption, with the understanding that if the Jew ever sold the land the Christian leaders would have the right to repurchase the property. The Israeli decision to violate these understandings created tension with Muslim and Christian leaders.

With so much land taken for Jewish settlements, virtually every Palestinian farmer felt personally threatened. Quiet villages became militantly defiant. Concern also increased among neighboring countries that Israel was planning to expel the Palestinians. Statements by militant Israeli leaders--some of them in the cabinet--suggested that this was a possibility. In places like Iraq (which borders on Jordan) there was a sense of impending confrontation with Israel. Direct clashes between Jews and Palestinians also escalated considerably. Both Jews and Palestinians became afraid to go into the others' neighborhoods.

A few years ago, Yehosephat Harkabi, former head of Israeli military intelligence, spoke in Detroit. Harkabi is concerned about what he considers an unstable political situation based on the population figures noted above. His comments (during the Cold War) are worth reporting. He described the Israeli situation in American terms, saying: "You Americans have the most powerful army in the world. No one can challenge you. But if you had 120 million Russians living in America--all completely loyal to the Soviet Union--your great army would be of no use and you would not be safe. That is our situation. The simple fact is that we must either have a Palestinian state in our neighborhood or we will become a Palestinian state."

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#### **TURNING POINT IV: 1987 - THE INTIFADA**

On December 8, 1987, an Israeli vehicle crashed into a crowd of Palestinians in a Gaza refugee camp, killing four. Palestinians were convinced the accident had been intentional. Israeli police concluded it was an accident with no malicious intent.

In a sense the cause is irrelevant. When political tension reaches a high level a small incident can ignite an uprising. Within days, the whole of Gaza and the West Bank were in a state of rebellion. Military efforts to suppress demonstrations made matters worse. The demonstrations had become a national uprising known as the *Intifada* (the word means "shaking off").

Future historians will see the Intifada as a turning point. It produced new Palestinian leaders from among those living inside the occupied Palestinian territories rather than in exile; it brought rival factions together into an organization called the Unified Leadership of the



Uprising; it radicalized many people who had previously been quiet: merchants, intellectuals, villagers, middle classes.

It also produced a major shift in the PLO. In November 1988, the Palestinian National Council (the Palestinian parliament) met in Algiers. After lengthy debate they voted overwhelmingly (85-15%) to accept the partition of Palestine based on UN Resolution 181, to accept Israel, to renounce terrorism, and to call for a negotiated settlement based on UN Resolutions 181 and 242. They also declared Palestine to be an independent state. The US quickly opened up dialogue with the PLO, but broke it off some months later when some Palestinian guerrillas not under PLO control tried to land on a beach near Tel Aviv.

Israel came to realize the costs of occupation: the army spent its time patrolling Palestinian towns; financial costs soared, there were serious US-Israeli tensions; scores of Israeli soldiers protested, and human rights groups criticized Israeli policies. Both Israelis and Palestinians noted increases in spouse abuse, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Among Palestinians, factional fighting left hundreds dead. The Intifada showed that while the Palestinians are not powerful enough to expel the Israelis, they themselves cannot be defeated. The occupation has become costly to both Israelis and Palestinians.

In 1988, as the PLO endorsed negotiations, Israeli voters reelected Yitzhak Shamir and the hard-line Likud Party. It was not until 1992 that Israelis abandoned Likud and elected the more moderate Labor party.

In 1991 the Gulf War occurred and Talks began at Madrid. These talks brought together Israelis, Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, and Lebanese.

## Human Rights Issues

The following figures report on events in the Occupied Territories from the beginning of the Intifada (December 9, 1987) through 1992.

Palestinians killed by Israelis	1,119
Palestinian injuries requiring hospitalization (estimated)	120,446
Palestinians expelled to foreign countries	483
Administrative detentions without charge	15,320
Curfew days*	11,151
Land confiscated (acres)	87,726
Houses demolished or sealed	2,065
Trees uprooted	128,364

\* A "Curfew Day" refers to an area with 10,000 or more residents kept under curfew for 24 hours or more. Between January 16 and February 28, 1991 the Occupied Territories were under almost full time curfew. This curfew time is not included.

**Source:** Palestine Human Rights Information Center, Chicago.

According to the Israelis there were also 48 Israelis killed in the Occupied Territories from the beginning of the Intifada-February, 1993: 19 soldiers and 29 civilians. They say 760 Palestinians were

killed by other Palestinians through November 1992. Many of these were alleged to be collaborators working for Israeli intelligence.

### Israelis and Palestinians: Populations Figures

	Israelis	Palestinians	Total
Israeli total (including all of Jerusalem)	4,168,700	921,300	5,090,000
Israel less Jerusalem	3,741,700	762,000	4,512,000
Greater Jerusalem	427,000	151,000	578,000
East Jerusalem	135,000	155,000	284,000
West Jerusalem	294,000	---	294,000
West Bank	97,000	1,150,000	1,247,000
Gaza	3,600	796,000	799,600

**Source:** Israeli and US Governments

### QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON THREE

1. Discuss these and why they are important: the Arab Revolt, Peel Report, UN Resolution 181, UN Resolution 194, UNRWA, Palestinian Occupied Territories, Likud.
2.
  1. Why did Jews want a Jewish state?
  2. Why did Palestinians oppose a Jewish state?
  3. Instead of a Jewish state, what did Palestinians propose?
  4. In 1948 was there an alternative to war? What?
3.
  1. After 1947 there were significant Jewish population movements. What movements occurred? Did these movements make Jews more secure or less secure?
  2. After 1947 there were significant Palestinian population movements. What movements occurred? Did these movements make Palestinians more secure or less?
  3. Where do Palestinians live today? Find the five largest concentrations.
4. Discuss the June War of 1967 (The Six Day War). What would you say were the two most significant results of this war? Do you think this war reduced tension or increased it?
5. What were the Sabra and Shatila Massacres? The Black September Uprising?
6. What is the Intifada? What caused it? What do you think would end it?

7. Can you make a "time line" that shows major events for Britain, Jews, Palestinians, and other Arabs?
8. The writer says that "when political tension reaches a high level a small incident can ignite an uprising." Do you think this is true? Can you think of any examples?
9. Extra Credit Assignment: Go to your city library and see how newspapers and newsmagazines covered major events at the time. Look particularly at the creation of Israel, the Palestinian refugees of 1948, Black September, Sabra and Shatilla. Do you think coverage was fair?
10. Thought Question: In 1948 there was talk of sending American troops into Palestine to restore order. What arguments would people have made for this proposal? Against it? Would most Jews have supported or opposed this proposal? Most Palestinians?
11. Thought Question: Recent presidents (Carter, Reagan, Bush) have had disagreements with Israel over Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Why do you think these disagreements occurred?
12. Thought Question: Palestinians who were driven from their homes or who fled during the hostilities of 1948 were not allowed by the government of Israel to return. Why do you think the government of Israel took this position?
13. Thought Question: In 1987 Palestinians, through the Intifada, got the world's attention. Was there any alternative method that could have captured the world's attention? If so, what was it?
14. Thought Question: The UN has passed many resolutions urging a two-state solution, repatriation or compensation for refugees, and Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. Why do you think these resolutions have not been enforced? At a time when the world community was insistent that the UN resolutions on Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait be enforced, why do you think the Israeli/Palestinian resolutions have not been enforced?

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Go on to Lesson 4.  
Go back to Lesson 2.

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USS Liberty

## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### **PART II, LESSON FOUR: THE PALESTINIAN SITUATION AND PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM**

It is important to understand how Palestinian views have changed over the years. Keep in mind two points as you read. First, people respond to the circumstances in which they live. If you are rich, you see problems one way; if you are unemployed, you see them a second way; if you own a small shop, you see them a third way. We must understand the circumstances in which Palestinians live if we are to understand their positions and actions.

Second, there are about five million Palestinians. Like Americans, Mexicans, Canadians, and Israelis they disagree on political issues. They also change their minds as new circumstances develop. It is a mistake to think Palestinians have a common view that remains unchanged. As we will see, their view changed considerably over the years.

#### **The Palestinian Situation**

In 1948, there were approximately 860,000 Palestinians inside today's Israel. About 700,000 were driven out or fled during the fighting that followed the declaration of Israeli statehood. The Palestinian population of Jerusalem went from 75,000 to 3,500; of Jaffa from 70,000 to 3,600; of Haifa from 71,000 to 2,900; of Lydda-Ramle from 35,000 to 2,000; of Tiberias from 5,300 to zero. All refugees lost their property (about 800,000 acres were taken for Israeli use.). The 160,000 Palestinians still in Israel in 1949 when the fighting stopped lost another 250,000 acres. The Palestinians in Israel were left without resources or strong leaders.

#### **Political Evolution**

In the immediate aftermath of 1948, Palestinians took two different paths. One group under a leader named Amin Hussein called for the end of partition and the creation of a secular state in all of Palestine that would include Muslims, Jews, and Christians. A second group living in exile in Jordan agreed to unite the West Bank and East Jerusalem with Jordan to form one country under Jordanian leadership. This was done in 1949. Many Palestinians were so angry at this that they came to view Jordan as an enemy almost as much as Israel. No Arabs recognized the unification with Jordan as a permanent solution, nor did the US. By the early 1950's the

Palestinian leaders seemed ineffective and unable to speak for their people.

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## **THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AND BEYOND**

In 1964 the Arab states created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). While it was supposed to represent the Palestinians, it really represented the views of President Nasser of Egypt. Its first leader made wild and irresponsible threats to drive Israelis into the sea. He had little support among Palestinians for he was seen as a puppet of the Egyptians. In the 1960s Palestinian students began to form their own organizations independent of control by Arab governments (although the Syrians, Libyans, and Iraqis continued to fund and control particular groups). Yasser Arafat, an engineering student at the University of Cairo who started a successful engineering firm in Kuwait, founded an independent Palestinian-run party called Fatah. He is said to have the backing, for most of the recent past, of about 80% of the Palestinian people.

In the 1967 war, the Arab armies did very badly against Israel. Palestinians came to believe that if they were ever to have their land, they would have to do it themselves.

In March 1968, 15,000 heavily-armed Israeli soldiers entered Jordan to destroy a Palestinian guerrilla center at Karameh in the Jordan valley. After a day of fierce battle, the guerrillas--under the leadership of Arafat's Fatah--held. The Palestinians had taken big losses but had stood against the Israeli army. For them, this was a major achievement. Overnight, Arafat was a hero. From this point on, he was the principal leader of the Palestinian people.

In 1969 Arafat became chairman of the PLO and changed it into an umbrella organization with membership open to all Palestinian groups. It is headed by a parliament called the Palestine National Council. Members of the PNC are chosen by their respective groups: students, women, journalists, and military leaders. American Palestinians have four members.

Over the years the PLO has had three different formal positions on the Palestinian-Israeli problem. The first was called the PLO National Charter, adopted in 1964 when the PLO was under Egyptian control; the second was called the Democratic Secular State proposal of 1974; the third is the Palestinian Declaration of Independence of 1988, commonly called the two-state solution.

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## **THE PLO CHARTER**

The PLO Charter saw Israel as a creation of western colonialism that "conspired and worked to displace" the Palestinians; it says Palestine has a right "to regain its homeland" and the "right of self-defense." The Charter is organized into Articles. Some important ones are listed here.

Article 2: "Palestine with its boundaries at the time of the British Mandate is a regional indivisible unit."

Article 3: "The Palestinian Arab people has the legitimate right to its homeland and is an inseparable part of the Arab Nation. It shares the sufferings and aspirations of the Arab Nation and its struggle for freedom, sovereignty, progress and unity."

Article 12: "Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary goals; each prepares for the attainment of the other. Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine, and the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity. Working for both must go side by side."

Article 13: "The destiny of the Arab Nation and even the essence of Arab existence are firmly tied to the destiny of the Palestine question. From this firm bond stems the effort and struggle of the Arab Nation to liberate Palestine. The people of Palestine assume a vanguard role in achieving this sacred national goal."

Article 6: "Palestinians are those Arab citizens who were living normally in Palestine up to 1947, whether they remained or were expelled. Every child who was born to a Palestinian parent after this date whether in Palestine or outside is a Palestinian."

Article 7: "Jews of Palestinian origin are considered Palestinians if they are willing to live peacefully and loyally in Palestine."

Article 8: "Bringing up Palestinian youth in an Arab and nationalist manner is a fundamental national duty. All means of guidance, education and enlightenment should be utilized to introduce the youth to its homeland in a deep spiritual way that will constantly and firmly bind them together."

Article 15: Under Palestinian rule, "all the holy places would be safeguarded, and the free worship and visit to all will be guaranteed, without any discrimination of race, colour, tongue, or religion."

Article 16: "The liberation of Palestine, from an international viewpoint, is a defensive act necessitated by the demands of self-defense as stated in the charter of the United Nations."

Article 17: "The partitioning of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of Israel are illegal and false regardless of the loss of time, because they were contrary to the wish of the Palestine people and its natural right to its homeland, and in violation of the basic principles embodied in the charter of the United Nations, foremost among which is the right to self-determination."

Article 18: "The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate system and all that has been based upon them are considered fraud. The claims of historic and spiritual ties between Jews and Palestine are not in agreement with the facts of history or with the true basis of statehood. Judaism because it is a divine religion is not a nationality with independent existence. Furthermore the Jews are not one people with an independent personality because they are citizens of the countries to which they belong."

Article 19: "Zionism is a colonialist movement in its inception, aggressive and expansionist in its goals, racist and segregationist in its configurations and fascist in its means and aims. Israel in its capacity as the spearhead of this destructive movement and the pillar for colonialism is a permanent source of tension and turmoil in the Middle East in particular and to the international community in general."

Article 26: The PLO "cooperates with all Arab governments...and does not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab state."

Article 29. "This Charter cannot be amended except by two-third majority of the National Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization in a special session called for this purpose."

### **Analysis of the Charter:**

The Charter says the creation of Israel was illegal because it did not win the consent of the Palestinian people. We will see below that at the Algiers Conference of 1988 the PLO in effect amended the Charter by an 85-15% vote to accept UN Resolution 181 of 1947 which partitioned Palestine and created Israel. Arafat said this vote made the PLO Charter "null and void" (although many Israelis insist that the charter represents the "real" Palestinian position).

Arab Nationalism does not mean all Arabs should have one government. It means Arabs should act together, should be free of foreign control, should be able to shape their own destiny. It says the 170 million Arab people are divided and weak and controlled by outsiders. The PLO Charter supports Arab Nationalism but also Palestinian Nationalism. It sees the liberation of Palestine and the liberation of the Arab people as linked together.

Education is key to Palestinian identity; like Jews, Palestinians believe that education and study are ways to maintain their identity. It is no accident that they have become one of the most educated of all Arab peoples. A major organization of the PLO is the education department, which runs many schools.

Palestinians distinguish between terrorism--attacks on "soft" targets such as civilians--and resistance (attacks on Israeli military or other targets). The PLO has renounced terrorism but affirms the right to resist, noting that such a right is guaranteed in international law. Some militant groups insist on the right to hit any target.

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### **DEMOCRATIC SECULAR STATE PROPOSAL OF 1974**

After the 1967 War, the Palestinian mainstream under Arafat moved towards negotiation with Israel. (The radicals led by George Habash broke with him over this and formed a group called the Rejectionist Front. The Rejectionists aligned with the Soviet Union and radical Arab states, and endorsed the Three No's Policy of 1974: no peace, no negotiation, no recognition. They assassinated Palestinians they

suspected of wanting to negotiate.) In 1974, Arafat spoke to the UN. He called for a united Palestine with a secular government that treated all citizens equally and included all Israelis and Palestinians. Arafat said this was his "dream." It is commonly called "The Gun and Olive Branch" speech.

Arafat said there was "a new Palestinian individual" who was looking to the future. "For many years now, our people has been exposed to the ravages of war, destruction and dispersion. It has paid in the blood of its sons, which cannot ever be compensated. It has borne the burdens of occupation, dispersion, eviction and terror more uninterruptedly than any other people. And yet all this has made our people neither vindictive nor vengeful...." And just as Palestinians deplore attacks on Palestinians "we deplore all those crimes committed against the Jews. We also deplore all the real discrimination suffered by them because of their faith."

Arafat talked of the struggle of Palestinian soldiers then named two fighters, one Jewish, one Christian. Both fight in the cause of justice. The Jewish revolutionary "now languishes in a Zionist prison among his co-believers." And a Catholic Bishop is under arrest so that "all men may live on this land of peace in peace."

Arafat spoke of his "dream" that all lovers of justice--Jew, Muslim, Christian--could live together in the new Palestine. "Why therefore should I not dream and hope? For is not revolution the making real of dreams and hopes? So let us work together that my dream may be fulfilled, that I may return with my people out of exile, there in Palestine to live with this Jewish freedom-fighter and his partners, with this Arab priest and his brothers, in one democratic State where Christian, Jew and Moslem live in justice, equality, fraternity and progress."

"In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution I proclaim before you that when we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination...We offer them the most generous solution, that we might live together in a framework of just peace in our democratic Palestine."

Arafat's ending gave the speech its name. Speaking to the world body, he said: "In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution I appeal to you to accompany our people in its struggle to attain its right to self-determination...to aid our people's return to its homeland from an involuntary exile...I appeal to you to enable our people to establish national independent sovereignty over its own land. Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom-fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. I repeat: do not let the olive branch fall from my hand. War flares up in Palestine, and yet it is in Palestine that peace will be born."

The speech rejected the idea of a Jewish state and did not guarantee the right of Jews living overseas (for example, in America) to go to Israel. The proposal was received with hostility by the Israeli



government.

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## **TWO-STATE SOLUTION OF 1988**

Although many Palestinians, including some PLO leaders, had said for several years that they accepted a "two-state" solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was not until 1988 that a clear official PLO declaration was made. In November the Palestinian National Council met in Algiers and made a revolutionary break with the past. Many Palestinians called it a "Historic Compromise." The Intifada had been going on for almost a year and over 236 Palestinians had been killed, many of them youths. For Palestinians, the fact that so many youths were dying was a powerful impulse to action. In speeches, the "martyrs" were commonly called "The Children of the Stones" (because they threw stones at Israeli soldiers). Most Palestinian groups were at Algiers, even the militants who had boycotted the PLO for over a decade. The proposals before the PNC were revolutionary: accept UN Resolution 181 and the partition of Palestine, accept Israel as a permanent and legitimate state, and renounce terrorism. The debate went on for days. Finally, the resolutions passed by 85% to 15%. The militants were unhappy, but they accepted the result. The US soon opened dialogue with the PLO. This dialogue was broken off some months later when a militant group associated with the PLO attempted a failed raid on Tel Aviv. While this raid had not been authorized, the PLO was held responsible. Dialogue was not resumed until the fall of 1993.

At Algiers, the PLO also issued a Declaration of Independence. These are its main points:

"Palestine, the land of the three monotheistic religions, is where the Palestinian Arab people was born, on which it grew, developed and excelled. The Palestinian people was never separated from or diminished in its integral bond with Palestine. Thus the Palestinian Arab people ensured for itself an everlasting union between itself, its land and its history... The call went out from the Temple, Church and Mosque that to praise the Creator, to celebrate compassion and peace was indeed the message of Palestine."

The Declaration says international law is on the Palestinian side. Even as enemies created the "falsehood" that "Palestine is a land without a people" international bodies were proclaiming otherwise. The Charter of the League of Nations (1919) affirmed the right of Arab states including Palestine to their independence.

While UN Resolution 181 partitioned the homeland, and led to exile for Palestinians "...yet it is this Resolution that still provides those conditions of international legitimacy that ensure the right of the Palestinian Arab people to sovereignty" since it acknowledges that there should be a Palestinian state as well as a Jewish state.

"Now at last the curtain has been dropped around a whole epoch of prevarication and negation. The Intifada has set siege to the mind of official Israel, which has for too long relied exclusively upon myth and terror to deny Palestinian existence altogether. Because of the

Intifada and its revolutionary irreversible impulse, the history of Palestine has there arrived at a decisive juncture."

The PNC declared the existence of a Palestinian state:

"Now by virtue of natural, historical and legal rights, and the sacrifices of successive generations who gave of themselves in defense of the freedom and independence of their homeland;

"In pursuance of Resolutions adopted by Arab Summit Conferences and relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the Resolutions of the United Nations Organization since 1947;

"And in exercise of the Palestinian Arab people of its rights to self-determination, political independence and sovereignty over its territory,

"The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem

"The State of Palestine is the state of Palestinians wherever they may be. The state is for them to enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity, theirs to pursue in it a complete equality of rights. In it will be safeguarded their political and religious convictions and their human dignity by means of parliamentary democratic system of governance, itself based on freedom of expression and the freedom to form parties. The rights of minorities will duly be respected by the majority, as minorities must abide by decisions of the majority. Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights of men or of women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex, under the aegis of a constitution which ensures the rule of law and an independent judiciary. Thus shall these principles allow no departure from Palestine's age-old spiritual and civilization heritage of tolerance and religious coexistence."

"The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the UN Charter and resolutions. Without prejudice to its natural right to defend its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against the territorial integrity of other states."

The Declaration ends with a Sura (chapter) from the Koran, emphasizing that all existence and power are in the hands of God.

"Say: 'O God, Master of the Kingdom,  
Thou givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt,  
and seizest the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt,  
Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou  
abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand  
is the good; Thou art powerful over everything."

## Who Opposes the PLO?

There are three main opponents to Yasser Arafat's PLO.

1. On the left various socialist groups think Arafat is too close to business and banking interests and too willing to negotiate with Israel or cooperate with America. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is one of these. It is led by George Habash, a Christian doctor. It opposes any negotiations.
2. On the right some Islamic groups feel the PLO is too willing to cooperate with socialists and is too willing to negotiate with Israel. They feel there should be a united Palestine where Jews could live but which would not be governed by Jews. The largest of these groups is called HAMAS, the Islamic Resistance Movement.
3. Several Palestinian radicals have their own military organizations. Abu Nidal is one of these. He is bitterly and violently opposed to the PLO for what he sees as its moderate positions. He has carried out airplane bombings and attacks on civilians and has tried to assassinate Arafat. He opposes any negotiation with Israel. He is probably funded by Iraq.

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON FOUR

1. Where did Palestinians live after 1948? How many were left in Israel? To which countries did they go? With a compass (or a computer), make a pie chart of the Palestinian diaspora. Under the PLO Charter, what was promised to Jews of Palestinian origin? What was promised for all holy places?
2. . What or who are the following and why are they significant? FATAH, Amin Hussein, Karamah, Yasser Arafat.
3. The Algiers statement uses the term "self-determination." What does this mean and why is it important?
4. Imagine you are an Israeli who wants to live in peace with Palestinians. How would you react to the Palestinian Declaration of Independence?
5. Break into three Palestinian delegations. One supports the PLO Charter, one the Democratic Secular State proposal, one the Declaration of Independence. Each team should discuss among itself the reasons it supports its position, what advantages would come from its position, and what disadvantages. Teams may want to list their hopes and plans for the future on butcher paper or poster board. Then the teams should come together, explain their views to each other, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different positions.
6. Thought Question: Discuss the Koranic Sura (chapter) that is quoted in the Declaration. (a) Why do you think the Palestinians included a religious passage in their Declaration of

Independence? (b) Does the Sura sound religious to you or political? (c) The Sura uses the word "abase." What does this mean? When Muslims pray they get down on their hands and knees and touch their heads to the ground. This is called abasement. Why do you think they do this? Do you do anything similar in your religion? (d) Do you think it appropriate for political leaders to quote from religious texts in public meetings or documents? Can you think of any similar examples in America?

7. Thought Question: The Palestinian political program changed from the 1974 call for a united democratic, secular state to the 1988 call for two-states: one Jewish, one Palestinian. What factors do you think led to this change? In the meantime, what was happening to Israeli opinion?

### Real People Face Real Problems

As you discuss these options, remember that people see things according to their circumstances: young people are different from their parents, the rich are different from the poor, farmers are different from city people, and those who have suffered personal loss are different from anyone else. Not all Palestinians had the same reaction to the Declaration of Independence. Below are profiles of six Palestinian families based on real cases. Break into six teams with each team representing one of the families. Discuss how you feel about the Declaration and the idea of a two-state solution and then explain why you feel that way to the other teams. Which of you would prefer the PLO Charter or the Democratic Secular State proposal? Which would be willing to accept Israeli and Palestinian states side-by-side? Which would be involved in acts of violence? Would any families just stay out of politics?

Mrs. Talhami, 53 years old, lives in a refugee camp in Lebanon. Most of her village fled together in 1948 and still live in the same corner of the camp. The camp is crowded and life is difficult but they are afraid if they move to nearby towns and break up the village the children will grow up without a sense of who they are. Each home is 30x30 feet, including the courtyard. Today 13 people live in Mrs. Talhani's house including one son, two daughters-in-law, and 9 grandchildren. Her oldest son was killed in an Israeli air raid in 1988. Mrs. Talhani cleans an office after hours. Because her son is unemployed her small income supports the whole family (with some help from the UN). All thirteen people sleep in two bedrooms. There is also a small kitchen which doubles as a bedroom at night. On the wall are pictures of Jerusalem and Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Nasser runs a hotel in East Jerusalem. In recent years his income has fallen nearly 50% as tourists avoid Jerusalem out of fear of the Intifada. He is angry that the Jerusalem city government granted tax rebates to Israeli hotel owners but not to Palestinians. Mr. Nasser's son has lost hope in the future and moved to Brazil.

Mr. Masri is from Nablus. He is a successful businessman in Jordan. His son has a college degree and works for the government. The family have a beautiful house in the suburbs. In his living room there is a picture of a smiling Mr. Masri shaking hands with King Hussein.

Ibrahim is 19. He is unemployed. His father is a farmer near Bethlehem. They grew olives on the farm and grazed sheep on the nearby hill that had been owned by the village for generations. In 1984 the Israeli government took the hill for a Jewish settlement claiming it was public land. Much of the village was impoverished by this. Recently, there have been violent clashes between Jewish settlers and the young men of the village. Ibrahim's brother was shot and is disabled; another brother is in detention although he was never charged with any crime. Ibrahim heard from another detainee that his brother had been tortured.

Mrs. Elias is a teacher in Chicago. Her parents left Gaza in 1974 to start life over in America. She is proud of being an American but is also proud of being Palestinian. Recently her 7-year old daughter came home from school crying because someone had called her a terrorist. The little girl wants to change her name from Jamele to Jennifer so people will not know she is an Arab. Mrs. Elias sends money to her family in Gaza each month.

Mr. Ziad is an engineer. He lived for thirty years in Kuwait and owned a multi-million dollar construction company. After the Gulf war, Kuwait expelled almost all of the 350,000 Palestinians who lived and worked there. Mr. Ziad lost his home, his business, and most of his savings. He and his family now live in Jordan with his brother. He is unemployed.

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Go on to Lesson 5.  
Go back to Lesson 3.

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## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART II, LESSON FIVE: POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

#### HOW TO STUDY ETHNIC CONFLICTS

When social scientists study political conflicts (especially those rooted in ethnic differences) they ask certain questions:

First, what is the numerical ratio of the groups? Is it 88-12 (the White-Black ratio in the US) or 60-40 (the Protestant-Catholic ratio in Northern Ireland), or 15-85 (the White-Black ratio in South Africa)? Numbers are very important.

Second, is the minority dominant or subordinate? In South Africa the minority rules; in Northern Ireland the majority rules.

Third, does the minority group live in its own regions or are they spread around? A geographically-based group is a potential nation if it secedes. In Canada, most French speakers live in Quebec; in America, African-Americans are dispersed across the country. These differences affect how the group organizes and how effective it is.

Fourth, are group identities "hard" or "soft"? Some traits are not easy to change, like skin color or religion; others are less firm, such as difference between Northerners and Southerners in America.

#### THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN SITUATION

Inside of Israel Jews are a dominant majority of 82:18 percent. In Jerusalem (taking East and West Jerusalem together) Jews lead by a 53:47 ratio. When we add Israel and the Occupied Territories together, including Jerusalem, the proportion becomes 64:36. And since Palestinians have more children on average than Israelis, the ratio would approach 50:50 in time.

To a large extent Jews and Palestinians are geographically concentrated. Most Jews live in Israel and most Palestinians live in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. There are exceptions of course. Many Jews live in the new ring of suburbs around East Jerusalem and in the new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. And many Arabs live inside of Israel, particularly in Galilee, including

Nazareth, and in the Negev Desert in the South.

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## **FIVE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES**

Let us look down the road 25 years. What could be the outcome of this conflict? Five possibilities come to mind. They are outlined below. Read these carefully and think of the costs and benefits of each. Which do you think is most likely (even if you would not want to see it)? Which outcome would you *like* to see? Which do you think most Israelis would like to see? Most Palestinians?

### **Outcome One: Status Quo**

At the present time Israel controls all of the territory of Palestine, including the part inhabited mostly by Israelis and the parts inhabited mostly by Palestinians. There is considerable fighting in the Palestinian areas, where the Palestinians are resisting Israeli rule. Israel maintains a very high level of military activity in these occupied areas. The Palestinians seem determined to have their independence, and the Israelis do not seem able to defeat them. Israel has taken much Palestinian land for Jewish use and has placed Jewish settlers inside of the Palestinian territory. The US continues to provide considerable economic, military, and diplomatic support to Israel. The Palestinians are spread around the Arab world and seem unable to challenge Israel in any military sense. While the Arab states make speeches on behalf of the Palestinians they seem unwilling to use their military forces against Israel. For the time being Israel seems capable of defeating any combination of Arab armies.

The Option: The status quo means two things: a) Israel would continue to rule a large Palestinian minority in a non democratic way, and b) Israel would continue to control the land captured in 1967. A variant of the status quo might involve some form of autonomy in which Palestinians would have limited self-government under Israeli authority.

Many Israelis believe this is the most likely outcome. They say there is no reason to think that problems necessarily have solutions. The Irish have fought with the English for hundreds of years. These Israelis say they will simply have to deal with uprisings and revolts indefinitely. Perhaps tension, conflict, and social deterioration are natural in politics.

### **Outcome Two: Unification of Lands and Peoples**

Would it be possible to unite Israelis and Palestinians into one country with equal rights for all and with a government that favored no religious or ethnic group? America has a government which in theory does not acknowledge religious or racial or ethnic differences. Canada has something similar, with special provisions for the French-speaking people of Quebec. Under this proposal Israel and the Occupied Territories would unite into one country. All Israelis and Palestinians now living on the land would have equal rights, and the government would no longer be "Jewish." Jews and Palestinians living overseas would either have the right to come to the new land or not, but on

equal terms for both (probably with some understanding that any refugee or threatened person of Jewish or Palestinian ancestry would be admitted immediately). There might be regional government inside of the country, allowing for regions where Jews or Arabs would be dominant, thus letting the two groups govern their own local affairs (such as education). But the central government would be non-religious and would not differentiate between Jews and Arabs. This was the position of certain Jewish groups and individuals (including Judah Magnes and Martin Buber) in the pre-1948 period and was the PLO Secular State Proposal between 1974 and 1988. It is still the position of some Palestinians and some Israelis.

### **Outcome Three: Partition into Two States**

In 1947 the UN proposed partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab. The UN assumed that Jews and Palestinians could never live peacefully in a single country and that partition was the only realistic option. In 1988 the PLO endorsed this "two-state solution." Various Israeli parties have also endorsed it, among them Meretz which joined the cabinet in 1992. This outcome would have several advantages: It would give both Israelis and Palestinians their own government and land; it would reduce tensions and allow money to be shifted to human development instead of military use; once there was separation, Israel and Palestine could cooperate economically; and the US would give aid to both sides to make sure the peace worked.

### **Outcome Four: Expulsion of the Palestinians**

In the 1970's extremist American Rabbi Meir Kahane moved to Israel and formed a political party. He described Arabs as a cancer and vermin that had to be expelled. He said the presence of non-Jews in Israel was a corrupting force that compromised Jewish civilization. His position (not supported by historical evidence) was that Palestinians were not truly a people but were just Jordanians, Syrians, Egyptians, or Lebanese who had come across the border to work. They should go back to where they came from. Although Kahane was assassinated in 1989, today there are two Israeli parties that advocate expulsion of Palestinians. And some public opinion polls say almost 40% of the Israeli public would consider some form of expulsion.

While expulsion would be a radical outcome, there are reasons why it might happen. The Jewish settlements are in place in the Occupied Territories and have taken much of the Palestinian land. They could be used as assault points on the Palestinian population. Also, large numbers of Jews might come from Russia, perhaps a million or more. They could be used to push out the Palestinians. Other efforts to work out a solution might fail. Also if America and other big countries were involved in a war somewhere else (perhaps in Asia or Latin America) expulsion might occur without anyone being able to stop it. Israel's leaders might decide that the threat of an uprising is so great that the dangers of expulsion are less than the dangers of not expelling. Also, some Israelis favor an effort to get Palestinians to leave through economic pressure: denying them jobs or a way to make a living. This is dramatically reducing the ancient Palestinian Christian population, descendants of the people converted to Christianity by the apostles. In the past twenty years the percentage of the Palestinian population that is Christian has fallen from 15% to 3% of the total. If half the



Palestinians in the West Bank left and if Gaza were given to Egypt and if 500,000 Russian Jews came to Israel, then the remaining Palestinians would be a much smaller minority who might be kept under control. Israel might then annex the Occupied Territories.

### **Outcome Five: Elimination of Israel**

Radical Palestinians (such as those in HAMAS) and even some Arabs who are not Palestinian feel that Israel has treated its subjects and its neighbors badly and cannot be trusted. They reject the idea of a Jewish state in the midst of the Arab and Muslim world as something that should not be allowed. These radicals will resist any settlement with Israel. At the present time, they are not in power, but the Arab world stretches from Mauritania to Iran and contains 170 million people. In contrast there are less than four million Israelis. So far, there is only one Arab state (Egypt) that has a peace treaty with Israel. Since 1948 Israel has had wars with all of its neighbors, sometimes with the Arab states attacking first. If at some time in the future, radical governments come to power in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and other countries, the situation could become different from today. If the US were to be involved in a war elsewhere, and if the Arab states were to form a common military alliance, they might defeat and conquer Israel. Many Jews could be forced to flee, with the remainder living under Palestinian rule.

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## **THE ISRAELI-PLO AGREEMENT**

In September, 1993 Israeli leader Rabin and Palestinian leader Arafat met at the White House and shook hands on a historic agreement to end the conflict between their two peoples.

Millions saw it as a breakthrough that would end a hundred-year war between Jews and Palestinians. Other saw it as a flawed document that would solve nothing.

What do you think? Look at the following summary. Is it close to one of the five outcomes above? Will it solve the conflict? Will it lead to a Palestinian state? Your teacher may want you to read the original document.

**PALESTINE GOVERNMENT:** There will be a Palestinian government with a base in Gaza and Jericho, but with authority over the whole of the occupied territories (with some exceptions). The size of the territory controlled by the Palestinians will increase over time.

**PALESTINE COUNCIL:** There will be an elected council chosen in a free election monitored by international observers. The Document says "In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order."

**WHO CAN VOTE?** All eligible Palestinians, including those who live in

East Jerusalem.

**LIMITS ON COUNCIL AUTHORITY:** The council will have authority over all Palestinians in the Occupied Territories but will be temporarily limited in other areas: "Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis."

**ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL:** Israeli troops will withdraw from populated areas. Foreign forces will be brought in for a transition period. There will be no Israeli soldiers around during voting.

**PALESTINIAN POLICE:** There will be "a strong police force." (Why do you think they put in the word "strong"?)

**TRANSITION PERIOD:** There will be five years to work out final arrangements through negotiations. During this time there will be discussions on "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest."

**NEGOTIATIONS BASED ON RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338:** The final outcome "will lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." These proclaim it inadmissible to acquire territory by force and call for Israel's withdrawal. (This is a good time to review those resolutions, especially 242.)

**REFUGEES:** The document makes little provision for refugees except to say that their situation will be discussed in the future. The refugees in Lebanon and Jordan and elsewhere felt betrayed.

**JERUSALEM:** There will be negotiation over Jerusalem. Arafat has said the Palestine government will soon have its capital there. When asked about this, Rabin said if Arafat wanted Jerusalem he could "forget it." Asked about Rabin's comment, Arafat said "He is talking of Jewish Jerusalem, not Arab Jerusalem."

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## QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES FOR LESSON FIVE

1. Do you understand the following words and why they are significant: dominant, subordinate, hard and soft identity, ratio, monotheistic, patriarch, conversion, status quo, mobilization, reserve duty, extremist, inevitable, option, vermin, expel, coup.
2. The author outlines five scenarios or outcomes. Has he missed any possibilities?
3. Talk to friends or neighbors who are Jewish or Arab and ask them what they think. Report back to the class.
4. If you have Jewish or Arab organizations in your town, ask to interview one of their officials. Try to find out what they would like to see as an outcome. (You might find that different organizations on a given side have different perspectives).

5. It might be interesting to invite Jewish and Arabic leaders to visit your class to discuss their positions. If you do this be sure to invite people from both sides.
6. Write to Israeli and Palestinian officials at the United Nations and ask them what their position is on negotiations and what outcome they would like to see.
7. Thought Question: The US is a major world power. We give more than \$3.5 billion dollars a year to Israel in economic and military aid, plus additional subsidized loans. (The grand total in 1993 is estimated at \$6.0 billion.) Should we use our influence to promote one of these outcomes? Which one?
8. Essay (unit evaluation). Choose one of the five options (or your own solution) and explain why you believe it is the best solution. Explain your position. Will your solution need to be enforced? If so, by whom? Who will pay for the enforcement? Is it fair for everyone, or will it provide the seeds for new problems?
9. Review the earlier discussion about the different parts of Jerusalem. Is there any way both Jews and Arabs could have their capital in Jerusalem? Do you think sharing or dividing would work? If so, what arrangement?
10. Do you see any section of the document that supports Rabin's position? Arafat's position?

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**This is the end of Part II.**

Go on to Overview.

Go back to Lesson 4.

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## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

**A Unit for High School Students** by Ronald Stockton, Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan-Dearborn  
Revised second edition, November 1993

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## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### **PART III, LESSON ONE: PARTITION AS A POLITICAL TOOL**

#### **Teaching Strategy**

This complex lesson has three parts: World War I, Wartime Agreements, and the Partition of the Arab World. You probably will not be able to cover everything. These are some suggestions:

1. Students need a map orientation. The Teacher Overview section (p.7-12) and Lesson One (p. 21) have lists of places students should know. There are suggested exercises in the student section that try to get students to think in terms of function: How do we get from A to B? How long would the trip take? Why is this place strategically important?
2. Begin by telling students about the conflict pattern summarized in the Teacher Background section below, then point out that the Arab world was historically relatively peaceful. By showing that something true today was not always true, you can also point out that it need not be true forever, that historical developments have causes and (perhaps) solutions. Understanding what causes conflict and how to reduce it will be the focus of this lesson and indeed of the whole unit.
3. To discuss the war in Europe, there are two maps and several questions. The student reading focuses on why decisions about the Arab world were linked to the war in Europe. You might want to pursue that idea of the eastern and western fronts, why Britain thought it could weaken Germany by attacking Gallipoli or by encouraging Arab or Jewish nationalism.
4. To discuss the various wartime agreements or commitments break students into groups as outlined in Question 7. Each group can decide which of the statements are favorable to their interests and why. They could draw up their own proposal and illustrate it on a map. After 20-25 minutes of preparation, their spokesperson could present the proposal to the class. The last part of the question--"can you work out arrangements that will satisfy all of you"--might be a creative project.
5. Orientation to partition: Present the American analogy then ask students to look at how the Arab world was divided. Focus

discussion upon whether this strengthened or weakened the region, increased or decreased tension. Have teams as above discuss the territorial outcome. Is this what they expected or wanted? To what extent are their interests protected?

## Teacher Background

Today, the Middle East is currently one of the most politically unstable regions in the world. Since 1970, 14 Middle East countries have had conflicts with neighbors: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Palestinians, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Yemen. (This list excludes internal uprisings and the Gulf War of 1990-1991.) Also since 1970 US troops have been involved in combat situations in the following places: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Israel, Iran, Syria, Somalia. (In addition, the US army prepared to intervene in Jordan during the Black September Uprising of 1970 and went on worldwide Nuclear Alert over the Israeli-Egyptian conflict in the Sinai in 1973.)

Historically there was no such pattern of conflict. The tension level we see today originated in this century. It cannot be explained in terms of Arab or Islamic culture or in terms of historic disputes that go back centuries (although there are such disputes). We have to ask what happened to produce the development of these on-going conflicts.

The partition of the region by Britain and France after World War I established a state system that was weak, unstable, and often rooted in ethnic regimes that were undemocratic. The purpose of the lesson is to understand what these powers, having brought the Arab world under control through victories over the Turks in World War I, did to maintain their dominance. The thesis is simple: to enhance their power Britain and France set up states that could be controlled. They used three techniques to achieve this: partitioning countries, shifting provinces and cities from one country to another, and relying upon ethnic minorities. While it was not necessarily their purpose to create weak, unstable, undemocratic regimes, that was the result, intended or not.

Keep in mind alternative techniques of control. In classical colonialism one country directly administers the affairs of another. Colonialism may or may not involve the transfer of populations from the ruling country to the ruled and the consequent capture of land. But there are other structures of control that do not rely upon imposed government. These may use mechanisms of influence and domination in which the weaker country governs itself but is controlled from the outside by economic or political means that are often invisible. In such situations, key resources and structures of power (such as banking, resource development, or arms supplies) are controlled from abroad. Also, local rulers may be beholden to overseas patrons.

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## WORLD WAR I

To understand how this partition occurred and why it occurred the way it did, it is important to understand the nature of World War I and the decisions and promises made during that war. Particularly significant



were promises made to Arabs and to Jews and the secret arrangement between Britain and France to divide the region. Students must understand how deadly the war was and how desperate Britain was for a breakthrough. This was a war of trenches with human losses greater than the world had seen before. By the end of the war in 1918 there were 10 million dead and 20 million wounded. In 1915 in the Battle of Ypres (in Belgium, to block a German advance into France) Britain literally lost half its total army. (Britain was a sea power with a standing army of about 100,000. In Ypres, they lost 50,000). This battle necessitated creation of an entirely new British army in 1916 made up of conscripts and volunteers. (The need for volunteers produced the famous "Britain Needs You" poster with Lord Kitchener looking sternly ahead and pointing ominously at the viewer. In America this became "Uncle Sam Needs You").

British strategy was to end run the German army by knocking Turkey out of the war and opening another front. In March 1915 Britain attacked Gallipoli south of Istanbul. The attempt was a disaster. In ten months of fighting British forces never got off the beaches. Their total losses were 25,000. The battle was such a failure that Winston Churchill's career was temporarily destroyed (he was Lord of the Admiralty--Navy Secretary--and was blamed for the defeat). The date of this battle is even now the National Day of Australia and New Zealand. (The fine Australian movie Gallipoli, starring Mel Gibson, tells the story of this battle as seen by four young men.)

In 1916 on the first day of the Battle of the Marne Britain lost very nearly the number the US lost in all of Vietnam (just under 50,000 compared with 58,000 in Vietnam). France and Russia were suffering comparable casualties. By this time, there were serious domestic tensions inside those countries. Britain began to think in different terms. First, they decided that instigating an Arab revolt would weaken Turkey and divert Turkish soldiers from the European front. Offering to support Arab independence would be the way of fomenting such a revolt. Second, they decided that having Jewish support for the war could be advantageous, and offering to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine would win world-wide Jewish support.

Some British leaders were ideologically sympathetic to Arabs and thought they deserved to achieve their national aspirations; likewise, some British leaders were sympathetic to the plight of Jews in Eastern Europe or were persuaded by evangelical religious teachings that it was God's wish that the Jewish people be returned to their ancient homeland (such people are called Christian Zionists). In both cases, those motivated by strategic considerations were more significant in the decision process than those with humanitarian considerations. And in typical realpolitic style, they concealed their true motives by statements that were couched in cultural terms or in embraces of high principle.

### **The Arab Revolt**

The British alliance with the Arabs was worked out between Sir Henry McMahon and Sherif Hussein of Mecca during 1915. Sherif Hussein is sometimes called King Hussein of the Hejaz. (Hejaz is the western province of what is now Saudi Arabia.) Hussein's Hashem family (hence called the Hashemites) historically looked after the Holy

Mosques at Mecca and Medina. He was also a descendent of Muhammed, a fact that granted him a certain status. He had four sons, Abdullah and Faisal being the most famous since they later became the kings of Jordan and Iraq. The letters of negotiation between Hussein and McMahon are quite controversial. Hussein was convinced the Arabs had been promised a unified Arab kingdom including Syria and Palestine. The British said later they had fulfilled their promise by putting Hashemites on thrones in Jordan and Iraq.

The Arab Revolt began in 1916. The purpose of the revolt was not that Arab armies defeat Turkish armies (although they did on several occasions), but that the revolt would divert Turks from the European war. British historian Arnold Toynbee later estimated that the Revolt tied down 65,000 Turkish soldiers.

It is important to discount somewhat the Lawrence of Arabia myth created by T. E. Lawrence and reporter Lowell Thomas: that the Arabs were disorganized tribes that had no concept of themselves as a people but that Lawrence--the brave, principled Englishman--organized them and taught them to be proud. This myth suggests that the Arabs were not militarily significant and had no aspirations for independence or capabilities of their own but were granted unearned concessions at the end of the war by benevolent Europeans. This is not a version of their history that Arabs respect, nor does it correspond to the facts.

### **The Balfour Declaration**

In America, President Wilson was reelected in 1916 on the slogan "He kept us out of war." Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was an outspoken pacifist. American public opinion opposed entry into the war. The British wanted America in the war and were convinced that Jewish influence could make a difference.

In February 1917 the Russian Revolution occurred and the new government threatened to take Russia out of the war. (This was the first of two revolutions. The Second Revolution in November brought Communists to power). Russian neutrality would have allowed Germany to concentrate its armies on the Western Front, a disaster for the Allies. Many British leaders were convinced the Russian revolutionary government of Alexander Kerensky was run by Jews (Kerensky himself was Jewish) and that by appealing to them as Jews they could keep Russia in the war. They also feared Germany was about to declare support for a Jewish state.

In 1916, Britain began negotiating a deal with Zionists: British support for a Jewish homeland in exchange for Zionist support for the war. The Balfour Declaration was issued in November, 1917, pledging Britain to support a Jewish "homeland" in Palestine. What the word "homeland" meant was unclear since Britain also committed itself to protect the rights of non-Jewish inhabitants, including their "civil" rights, a term that implied the right to participate in political decisions.

In 1936, Lloyd George (prime minister during the war) said "The Zionist leaders gave us a definite promise that, if the Allies committed themselves to giving facilities for the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine they would do their best to rally Jewish

sentiment and support throughout the world to the Allied cause. They kept their word." In 1937 he added that the Zionists "were helpful in America and in Russia, which at that moment was just walking out and leaving us alone."

**Danger:** If you discuss this be careful not to reinforce inadvertently anti-Semitic stereotyping. There is no evidence that the Russian Revolution or the Russian Communist Party were Jewish dominated and certainly most Jews who were Communists were (like other communists) ideologically opposed to Jewish or other ethnic nationalism. Nor is there evidence that prominent Jewish advisors or friends of President Wilson (Justice Louis Brandeis and Professor Felix Frankfurter are best known) were the determining factor in his decision to go to war. What is important is that some British leaders saw Zionism as an exceptionally powerful force in Moscow, Berlin, and Washington and apparently allowed these judgments (reinforced by Zionist leaders) to affect their decision. If you discuss this, emphasize that these views were distorted, but nevertheless seem to have been the basis of British action. You might also mention that a mere 20 years later Jews were rounded up in the Holocaust and were totally unable to protect themselves, a fact clearly inconsistent with British perceptions of Jewish "power" in 1917.

**Opportunity:** This might be a chance to discuss how perceptions of reality based upon stereotypical views of ethnic groups can distort decision-making even by top officials from whom we expect better judgments. Where do these views originate? Why do advisors not point out to leaders that their assumptions are unrealistic? Are such views really overriding factors in decisions or are they merely cited retroactively as reasons, while other considerations (such as the drive to power) are the true basis of decisions? In addition to perceptions of Jewish power, you might mention perceptions of Arab power. Universities and organizations that accept grants from an Arab state or even from Arab-Americans have been attacked as being under "Arab" control or influence. Such charges were made against Jesse Jackson when he ran for President since his urban development organization, Operation PUSH, had taken donations from Saudi Arabia. Cartoons showed Jackson in an Arab headdress with the title "Jesse of Arabia." Another showed him walking out of the Saudi Embassy with bags of money with the title "Run, Jesse, Run."

Likewise, in recent years there have been several cases of campaign contributions by Arab-Americans being returned as unwelcome. The most well-known of these incidents (but not the most recent) was when a donation by former Senator James Abourezk (a Lebanese-American from South Dakota who left office in 1981) to Massachusetts Congressman Joseph Kennedy was returned, with the comment that Kennedy's campaign did not want "that kind of money."

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## THE PARTITIONING OF AMERICA

There is a useful analogy to help students understand what happened to the Arab world. Suppose by some strange quirk the United States was conquered by outside powers Uruguay and Brazil. They would immediately run into two problems: First, the United States is a big

country. Providing enough soldiers and administrators to control such a territory would be nearly impossible. Second, while Americans may squabble among themselves, where their country is concerned they are a patriotic people and would pull together to resist foreign rule. Clearly if this conquest is to succeed two things must happen: America must be divided into smaller, more controllable units, and Americans must lose their sense of unity. Have students discuss how Uruguay and Brazil could weaken us for purposes of control. Ask students to suggest possibilities. Prompt them with suggestions below as necessary.

1. Divide us into multiple countries: (for instance, New England, South, Midwest, Pacific Northwest). Smaller areas are easier to control than larger ones.
2. When there is a strong state or region, split away its key city or province. (Thus New York state would lose New York City and Illinois would lose Chicago. Texas would be independent of the South, the Farm Belt would be independent of the Midwest, Florida and California would be on their own.)
3. Our conquerors could play religious and ethnic groups against each other. Where there is a majority group, put someone from the minority in control. **Note:** emphasize that our conquerors would not choose people of good will but militants who are intolerant of others. The purpose is not to bring us together by giving opportunities to minorities but to drive us apart by making us distrust each other. (If you can raise this with sensitivity and without playing upon latent prejudice, ask students to suggest cases: who would be in charge of New York, the Farm Belt, Utah, Mississippi, San Francisco?)
4. Bring in outside rulers. (Put Spanish-speaking Cuban Communists in charge of the Farm Belt and Utah conservatives in charge of San Francisco. Make rulers fearful of their own people.)
5. Establish a haven for refugees. (Turn northern California into a homeland for the Vietnamese boat people and other Vietnamese refugees who have no where else to go. Since California is a big state, the people in northern California could move south. Of course, since the "Republic of New Vietnam" would need all the water it could get to resettle refugees, it would terminate the export of water to southern California, disrupting agriculture in the dry half of the state. This would create tensions between the north and south. There would also surely be other disputes over sovereignty, territory, and legitimacy. Some southern Californians would probably question whether there even should be a RNV.)
6. Life after partition. Have students discuss what they think would be the relationships between these American states after partition. Would they be peaceful? What kind of disputes would arise? Would there be violence-prone nationalist groups that would question the very right of these states to exist and try to overthrow them by violence so as to reunite America into one? (Option: divide the class into groups representing the 4-5 new

"countries." Within each group assign one person the role of the "outside" ruler, who announces his new plan for the country. What will be the reaction of the people? Over what issues will they disagree?

7. There is a saying that "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts." It is also true that in some cases breaking up a larger group into smaller groups unleashes creativity and productivity that was previously inhibited and suppressed. Have the students discuss whether they think America would be stronger or weaker as a result of this partition. In the political realm? In the economic realm?

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## **PARTITIONING THE ARAB WORLD**

At the end of World War I the Allies imposed the Versailles Treaty on Germany. It took German territory, left German provinces under occupation, imposed heavy reparations, and declared Germany responsible for the war. In retrospect the treaty was so disastrous it was doomed to fail. A cynic might even say it had two unwritten clauses that were as powerful as if they had been signed in blood: that there shall be an Adolf Hitler to defy these treaties and there shall be a second world war to correct the decisions that ended the first.

In the Middle East, the agreements worked out were as disastrous as Versailles and set the stage for generations of conflict and violence. Playing upon Wilson's high goal of "a war to end all war" one contemporary general observed, it was "a peace to end all peace."

In discussing these agreements, note that we are focusing upon the motives of the Western powers, not the motives or interests of Middle Eastern peoples. Lebanese Maronites, Kurds, Jews, Druze, Alawis, Bedouins, and others had legitimate interests and sometimes powerful grievances. While the Western powers often used these grievances and interests for their own advantage, those interests are not addressed in this lesson.

Remember that Britain and France are acting to advance their influence in the region, not to advance principles of justice. While individuals may sometimes be motivated by principles, states are typically motivated to a desire to advance their interests. To the extent that they claim to be motivated by higher goals (the good of humanity, etc.) we are justified in being cynical. If students want to advance such arguments (which are common in American thinking), ask if they believe other countries are also motivated by such high goals: Mexico, Cuba, Iraq, China, Japan, Russia. This might generate some interesting discussions.

Early in the war Britain ordered a study of its interests in the Arab world. They had historically backed Turkish control of the region but now began to reconsider. The DeBunsen Report (1915) was an internal study of what British policy should be. While never officially adopted, it shows British strategic thinking. It suggested that Britain seize Arab territories after the war. British interests in India made the Persian Gulf and Iraq prime targets. Iraq was the most valuable place

in the region with water, rich soil, and strategic location (Iraqi oil had just been discovered and the British fleet had just shifted from coal to oil). Iraq had two outlets to the sea--through the ports of Basra-Kuwait and across land to Palestine (particularly the port at Haifa). These places had to be secured to control Iraq. Other places--such as Lebanon and Syria--were recommended for takeover but were less significant.

**Note:** This was an era prior to airplanes and satellites so strategic thinking was influenced by what was called "geopolitics." This was the assumption that by controlling certain geographical locations you could control or have influence in other locations. There was exceptional attention paid to certain "chokepoints" such as the Suez Canal, the Black Sea straits, the Panama Canal. Britain was particularly obsessed with enhancing its control of India, its greatest colony, the Jewel in the Crown. The most famous geostrategist was Sir Halford Mackinder of Britain who popularized the Heartland Theory. Mackinder said that if we stepped back and looked at a world map we would see that a giant "world island" (the Euro-Asian continent) spans the earth. The "heartland" of that island is Central Europe. According to Mackinder's famous conclusion: who controls the heartland controls the world island, who controls the world island controls the world. While this is not immediately relevant to the Arab world, it shows how such people thought.

In 1916 Britain and France secretly agreed to divide up the Arab world after the war (Sykes-Picot Accords). These agreements were secret until late 1917 when the Russian Revolution occurred and the Communists released the documents to the public. The release caused much diplomatic embarrassment since the agreements contradicted other agreements and public statements. In general terms, the Accords would have given the areas of contemporary Iraq, Jordan and Palestine to Britain; Syria and Lebanon would have gone to France; Russia would remain dominant in Central Asia; and Italy would get concessions in Asia Minor. Turkey would have been considerably truncated.

Arab leaders were shaken by the Sykes-Picot Accords. The Turks invited them to switch sides. But the US had entered the war and President Wilson's statements were reassuring. Wilson renounced secret treaties and insisted that in the Arab lands the people should shape their own destiny and should be autonomous. (American papers suppressed all information about the Sykes-Picot Accords until after the war. Wilson renounced secret agreements but not the secret agreements.) The Arabs remained in the war on the Allied side.

One of the British letters noted that the coastal area west of a line running through Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo would be treated differently. While this string of cities stopped well north of Palestine, it was this type of ambiguity that later enabled the British to say that they had not betrayed the Arabs but that the Arabs had simply not understood the letters.

**Woodrow Wilson:** President Wilson made several statements on the War that were very reassuring to Arabs:

1. Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918: He renounced secret

agreements and said all diplomacy and negotiations must take place in public. Point 12 specified that "The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development."

2. Four Principles, February 11, 1918: "That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were chattels or pawns in a game, even the great game, now for ever discredited, of the balance of power.... Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival states...."
3. Four Ends, July 4, 1918: "The settlement of every question, whether of territory or sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery."

### **The Post-war Treaties:**

The contradictory wartime promises and agreements were hammered out at the end of the war in various treaties. The most relevant was the Treaty of Sevres (1920), an effort to dismantle the Ottoman Empire. It granted independence to the Kingdom of the Hejaz (western Saudi Arabia), and turned Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia over to the Allied powers; it partitioned Turkey into Zones of Influence (Italian, French, British, Russian), gave independence to Armenia, and "autonomy" to Turkish Kurdistan (with independence forthcoming). Apart from separating the Arab provinces from Turkey, none of these provisions were implemented, primarily because Mustapha Kemal Ataturk, the father of modern Turkey, refused to accept the partitioning of his country, and organized military resistance to prevent it. Because of fierce Turkish opposition to being colonized, the powers met again in 1922 and finally signed a new agreement, the Treaty of Lausanne, in January 1923.

### **The Mandate System:**

During World War I there were commitments by President Wilson that this was a war of principle, not a war to acquire territory. Of course, Britain and France had different ideas. When the war ended, it was necessary to think up a new term for a colony. According to the logic of the day, a Mandate was not rooted in greed or expansionist impulses but in a desire to help various peoples "not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world..." Acquiring these territories was a "sacred trust of civilization." Mandates were put into three categories (A, B, C) based on their level of civilization. Arab countries including Palestine were Level A Mandates, meaning they were sufficiently advanced to have "Provisional" independence, and that the "wishes of these

communities" would be taken into account.

President Wilson was very interested in participating in these arrangements. He sent to the Senate a proposal to create an American Mandate over Armenia but it was defeated by opponents who said it would involve the commitment of up to 100,000 troops. The US also sent a delegation to the Middle East (the King-Crane Commission) to determine Arab wishes for their future. It found that Arabs wanted two things: 1) Greater Syria be kept as one unified entity and 2) if there had to be a mandate over Greater Syria it should be American, not British or French. The British and French, naturally, were not sympathetic to this American "meddling."

### **Hashemite Rulers:**

The Hashemite family of Iraq continued to rule until 1958 when it was overthrown in a bloody military coup. Faisal, the first of the Iraqi Hashemites, was a dynamic and creative ruler who won a certain level of popular support. Later rulers however, were less popular and effective. In 1958 Iraq was ruled by Faisal's grandson, a young boy called Faisal II. Actual power was held by an inner circle of corrupt rulers who were closely aligned with Britain. When Iraq joined Britain in a strategic alliance called the Baghdad Pact, military leaders overthrew the government. The boy king and other leaders were killed.

In Jordan, the first Hashemite ruler Abdullah was also a dynamic and creative leader who was very popular with his people. He also was closely linked to Britain in a strategic alliance, so closely linked in fact that in the mid-1950s the Jordan army was headed by a famous Englishman named John Glubb (also called Glubb Pasha). As mentioned elsewhere, the Jordanians were involved in the 1948 Palestine war in a way that offended many Palestinian nationalists. Abdullah was assassinated by a Palestinian in 1951. He was succeeded for a short time by his son Talal but the alleged breakdown of Talal's health led to his removal by the royal family. Talal's young son Hussein became king in the tumultuous period of the mid-1950s. He and his brother Crown Prince Hassan continue to govern the country.

### **Bedouins and Families:**

Bedouins are migratory people who live in the drier regions of the Middle East. They are particularly prominent in southern Jordan near Saudi Arabia. While well known to readers of National Geographic because of their "romantic" lifestyle, they are relatively few in number, being no more than perhaps 3% of all Arabs. They are often governed by tribal-type councils or family structures.

Arab society is characterized by extended families that may include thousands of persons. Some families control extensive farm or grazing lands. Most trace their origin to some famous ancestor. The Hashemites were of the family of Hashem, from which Muhammed sprang. As such they traditionally controlled and managed the holy mosques of Mecca and Medina. The leaders of the Hashemite family were politically ambitious and had been associated with various efforts to enhance their influence. The British aligned with them during World



War I, but the rise of the Saud family displaced them from their base in Arabia. Today the king of Saudi Arabia is called Protector of the Two Mosques.

Families are typically governed by councils or associations of family heads. Like the early Scottish clans, they often function as political units, working together to support favorite sons or political candidates. Because they have an internal authority structure, it was logical for the British to seek out prominent and influential families as potential allies, both during the war and for the creation of post-war governments. As a result of the McMahon-Hussein correspondence, the Hashemites became Britain's chosen rulers-to-be. This close alliance between British imperialism and the Hashemite family raised serious questions in the eyes of Arab nationalists about the very legitimacy of the country of Jordan in particular and of its rulers. The survival of Jordan's Hashemite dynasty beyond the tumultuous 1950s is a noteworthy achievement.

You will have to explain to your students what we mean by families. Most will assume the term refers to the smaller, nuclear families such as we have. In the west Arab families are sometimes called tribes, a word best avoided because of its association with primitive or backward ways. The more you can explain families as logical social and political entities, the easier it will be for your students to understand events.

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USS Liberty

## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART III, LESSON TWO: JEWS AND ZIONISM

#### Teaching Strategy

The underlying assumption of this lesson is that personal experience (collectively shared) produces common political perspectives and activities. The lesson has two components: shared Jewish experiences and the varieties of Zionism.

- Ask students how they would define "American." What does it mean to be an American? Put these answers on the board, making sure there are a variety of definitions and ideas: shared values, experiences, history, life styles, language, etc. Point out that this word is one we use to express our nationalism, our concept of what we are, and that we do not agree upon it. Point out that political parties and interest groups and religious groups all play a role in explaining our identity but they do not agree among ourselves on all points. Then introduce the word Zionism, which is a term of Jewish Nationalism. If we think "American" is difficult to define, keep that in mind as we examine Zionism.
- The Jewish condition: Three situations are described in the text: the Pale in East Europe, cosmopolitan West Europe (Austria, France, Germany), and the Holocaust. An underlying assumption is that those who share a common experience are impelled towards a common view. Break the class into three "Jewish" groups, one for each experience. Have them discuss that experience, what is important to them from that experience, and how it would cause them to think in terms of what it means to be Jewish. Reassemble the class. Ask groups to outline their points of identity, then try to find out what they share in common. Have questions 1,3,4,8 in mind when you lead the discussion.
- Option: Proceed as in the exercise above, except ask each of the groups which variety of Zionism they prefer and why.
- Option: Give each group butcher paper and paint or a magic marker. Ask them to describe their experience pictorially and link it to a place on the map where it happened. As before, they should explain their experience to the class, with listeners asking questions.

- There is an assumption that if students can humanize history rather than just analyze data they can understand better. There are six family cases in the Student Lesson. Break the class into six groups, one for each of the families. Ask students to discuss the varieties of Zionism and how their family would react. Which Zionism would their family support? (These families are used later. Do this exercise if possible).
- Herzl is a key personality. Have a dialogue between Herzl and representative of the other Zionism groups. What do they agree upon? Where do they disagree?
- Also discuss questions 2, 5, 6, 10 in the Student Lesson section.

Note that among the six families in the exercise in Lesson Two in the Student Edition, none are religious militants. It is also true among the six Palestinian families presented in Lesson Four. There are two reasons for this. First, it is better to focus upon political factors as explanations for how people behave since that is the focus of the unit. Second, students may have strange or even hostile views of religions other than their own, perhaps viewing them as inherently irrational or extremist. Even though there are Jews and Muslims (and American Christians) who are religious extremists, there is no reason to play into potential prejudices.

Zionism has come to be the term for Jewish Nationalism. It means different things to different people. Some of these perspectives are discussed below. You must decide how much of this complex history you want to present to your students. At the minimum they should be aware that there is variety of understanding among Jews. To the extent that there is agreement it is upon three things: there should be a Jewish state, it should be secure, Jews who are threatened should be able to go there to be safe. All other issues--the boundaries of the state, relations with the Palestinians, relations with American Jews, religious law--are in dispute.

Students should come out of the unit understanding the background forces that generated the Zionist movement. Particularly important are the decline of Jewish security in Eastern Europe in the late 19th century and the rise of anti-Jewish political movements in Western Europe at the same time. These dual threats caused millions of Jews to begin thinking of ways of escaping, or of adopting options only marginally considered in the past.

Prior to the 20th century there had been various Jewish colonization or settlement schemes but these were done either for religious reasons (to live in the Holy Land) or were economic ventures, such as those financed by Lord Rothschild. These movements were not "Zionist" in the sense of later efforts. One of the most famous of these is the Lovers of Zion (Hibbat Zion) settlement of 1881.

The key Zionist document is *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) by Theodor Herzl, written in 1896. This should be the focus of your lesson. It is discussed below. (Pronunciation is in the German way: the J is Y as in "youth"; the S is SH as in "shine"; the Z is "TS" as in "hits.")

Torah is the Jewish term for the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy). They are also known as the Books of Moses or The Law. To Christians the books are sometimes called the Pentateuch. When the gospels speak of The Law and the Prophets, the first half of the phrase refers to the Torah. The Torah is exceptionally revered in the Jewish faith.

## THE PRE-ZIONIST JEWISH SITUATION

The Pale of Settlement: In the nineteenth century Russian empire, there were areas where Jews could not live. The Pale was that area in eastern Europe where Jews by law *had* to live. It included parts of Poland, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Lithuania, and other provinces. According to the 1887 census there were 1.25 million Jews in Russian Poland, 3/4 million each in Lithuania and Byelorussia (White Russia, today called Byelorussia). Half lived in towns and cities, the rest in villages and hamlets, called *shtetls* by Jews. (The movie "Fiddler on the Roof" has one depiction of poor village life). By occupation 40% were in commerce, 30% were artisans, and 30% were in personal service. Jewish small merchants were prominent in grain trading and the related liquor trade, in innkeeping and the sugar industry. Wealthy Jews were involved in railroad construction, contracting, and commerce.

Jewish population under Russian control increased rapidly in the 1800s.

### Jewish Population under Russia

1800	1.0 million
1850	3.25 million
1900	5.5 million

Beginning in 1881 in Eastern Europe there were massacres and assaults (pogroms) against Jews. Many of these were secretly instigated by authorities in an effort to drive Jews out. The most infamous massacre occurred in Kishinev, Moldova in 1903, when 45 Jews were killed, 86 wounded, and 1500 stores and homes destroyed.

Russia's famous Hebrew language poet Chaim Bialek (1873-1934) went to Kishinev and wrote the poem "On The Massacre." A copy is included in the student packet. Ask students to read it aloud. The most famous line is "Revenge! Revenge! Cursed be he who cries Revenge! Fit vengeance for the death of a child the devil has not yet conceived."

As Jewish security declined, Jewish emigration out of Eastern Europe soared. This was the first strategy of Jews: escape. Between 1880 and 1920 approximately 2.5 million Jews left Eastern Europe, 2 million of whom came to America. Most American Jews trace their ancestry to those migrants. Below is the rate at which Jews left Eastern Europe, and how it changed.

Year	Number of Jews Leaving E. Europe
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1830-70	1,000----4,000 per year
1871-80	8,000----10,000 per year
1881-90	50,000----60,000 per year
1901-14	150,000---160,000 per year

Other Jews became active in various reform or revolutionary movements, attempting to change their country. When the Russian revolution finally occurred many Jews (and other ethnic minorities) were prominent in various revolutionary parties. (Alexander Kerensky, the socialist leader of the first Russian Revolution, was Jewish. Several top Bolsheviks were also Jewish.) Still others tried to accommodate to reality, making peace with the authorities. Students might discuss why they think different Jews opted for different strategies to deal with social injustice.

Discussion Topic: You might ask if students see any parallels between the Jewish and Black experiences. Under what circumstances would African-Americans come to see themselves as overseas Africans living in a foreign land? Remember that there *are* Black nationalist groups that say exactly that. Marcus Garvey in the 1920s and 1930s made such arguments, as did Elijah Mohammed and Malcolm X in the 1950s and 1960s. Today Louis Farrakhan is the most prominent Black Nationalist.

Keep in mind that both push and pull factors were at work in Jewish migration to Palestine. Among "push" factors were European massacres, poverty, economic vulnerability, and the collapse of the small handicraft industries upon which many Jews were dependent. Among "pull" factors were the desire to live in the Holy Land, and to fulfill the various historic pre-conditions that some believers thought were necessary before the Messiah would come. Americans typically believe that historical outcomes are the result of good arguments--that someone makes a persuasive case and others follow that person. The tendency of students may be to see Jews entirely as a religious group with religious motivations. In fact, nonreligious motivations--the desire to be safe, to have a decent standard of living--were far more prominent in the thinking of most Jews who migrated to Palestine.

This is a good point to ask students for family stories. These were the eras of immigrations from Southern and Eastern Europe. Most students from these areas will trace their migratory ancestors to this period.

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## JEWISH SITUATION IN WESTERN EUROPE

In France, the Dreyfus Affair of 1894-95 (and beyond) sent tremors throughout the Jewish community. During a time of tension between France and Germany, French intelligence discovered there was a spy in army headquarters. Military brass decided to blame Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the only Jew in the office. He was framed and in a rigged trial found guilty and given a long sentence on Devil's Island.

The trial produced outrage among civil libertarians, reformers, and socialists who came to be called the pro-Dreyfusards. Among them was writer Emile Zola, who published an open attack on the trial, naming names, and challenging those he accused of perjury and of framing Dreyfus to sue him. The article was entitled "J'Accuse" (I

accuse) and consisted of a series of specific indictments: Mr. X perjured himself, Mr. Y falsified evidence, Mr. Z knew of the above and did nothing, etc. Those accused did sue Zola and he was found guilty of libel. In spite of this temporary setback, the pro-Dreyfusards persisted until the injustice was exposed, Dreyfus was released, and the government collapsed. A new reformist coalition governed France for the next two decades. but to many Jews the lesson was not reassuring.

The sight of open anti-Semitism in France, the first country in Europe to eliminate all laws that applied specifically to Jews, sent a chill throughout European Jewry, convincing them that perhaps East Europe was not the only problem area in the world. Theodore Herzl covered the trial as a journalist and reported the anti-Jewish shouts he had heard as Dreyfus was taken away.

In Germany (and elsewhere) there was a new ideological racism that had an anti-Jewish component. This new racism originated among the educated classes and purported to be "scientific." Originating innocently enough in the 19th century effort to classify everything (including languages and peoples), it quickly veered into pseudo-science and racism. The Frenchman Gobineau said that "the history of mankind proves that the destinies of people are governed by racial law." This "law" determined that each national people was distinct, that each had its own strengths and weaknesses, and that mixing (either culturally or physically) was corrupting. By 1879 there was an Anti-Semitic League in Germany. It was only a matter of time until the expulsion of Jews was on the agenda.

A topic of confusion: The word "semitic" was coined in the 1700s to describe a family of languages that includes both Hebrew and Arabic. The word anti-Semitism was used in 1879 to describe a political movement in Europe that was anti-Jewish. The fact that Arabs are Semites raises confusion about when to use the word anti-Semite. A suggestion: Anti-Semitism was a contextual political movement involving anti-Jewish attitudes held by Europeans and Americans. Be cautious in using anti-Semitism to describe anti-Arab attitudes and avoid describing Arab criticisms of Israeli government policy as anti-Semitic. These uses add to confusion, rather than helping to clarify matters. At the same time, there do seem to be a core of hostile images that have been applied to both Jews AND Arabs. Both have been portrayed as conspiratorial, dishonest about their true motives, able to manipulate decisions from behind the scenes, prone to violence, and adherents of a wicked faith. Both have been tagged with caricatures that emphasize offensive physiological traits: long noses, corpulent bodies, leering smiles, lust for blond women, obsession with wealth. If you find some anti-Semitic cartoons (perhaps from the Nazi era) and some anti-Arab cartoons, they make for good classroom discussion. Contemporary comic books often have Arab villains. (See my article, "Ethnic Archetypes and the Arab Image" in McCarus, *The Arab-American Experience*, University of Michigan Press, 1994).

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## THE HOLOCAUST

While the Nazi Era and the Holocaust ("Shoah" in Hebrew) came after the formation of the Zionist movement, they clearly accelerated the

drive for a Jewish state. Some observers--among them many Jews--are convinced the state of Israel came about *because* of the Holocaust, that the European nations were so ridden with guilt that they acted to create a state for the refugees. This is a debatable conclusion. Governments seldom act out of emotion.

The number who died in the Holocaust was just under six million. This figure is very firm. There is no doubt about these deaths. There is also no doubt about the 6 million or so non-Jews who died. Gypsies, homosexuals, and communists were among those systematically exterminated. In less than four years, a third of all the Jews in the world were killed, 67% of those in Europe as a whole, and over 85% of those in Poland and other areas directly controlled by the Nazis. This was not the killings of Kishinev--of a raging mob. It was a systematic, cold-blooded effort to exterminate a whole people.

The Holocaust is a major factor in Jewish thinking. A 1984 survey in Israel shows the following attitudes about the Holocaust and its meaning: 87% feel that Jews cannot rely upon non-Jews; 75% feel if they could Arabs would subject Israel to a Holocaust; 61% feel the Holocaust was *the* major factor in establishing the state of Israel.

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## VARIETIES OF ZIONISM

Throughout history Jews have been vulnerable and have often been assaulted or expelled. Many people (including many non-Jews) believe there is something unique about the Jewish historical experience that made them vulnerable to attack. Many persons have made a simple argument: when Jews are attacked, they should have a place to go to be safe. Hence there should be a Jewish state. This is not "Zionist" in an ideological sense. It does not suggest that Jews are a national people, that all Jews should ultimately "return" to Israel, or even that Jerusalem should be the focus of Jewish efforts. It simply addresses a problem. With few exceptions, all Jews and most non-Jews would support this. Even Yasser Arafat has said that if Jews were attacked they would have refuge in a Palestinian state. This idea of "a Jewish homeland somewhere in the world" is probably close to a nearly-forgotten Jewish movement called Territorialism. It simply said there should be a Jewish-controlled place to which Jews could go to be safe. Places mentioned as possible sites were Palestine, Sinai, Iraq, Kenya and Argentina. Herzl was an advocate of this type of Zionism.

### Religious Zionism:

Religious Zionism has many permutations. At the simplest level, many Jews have long been inspired by passages in the Bible that speak of longing for Zion or devotion to Jerusalem. Among the most beautiful and haunting is the Song of the Exile, Psalms 137: 5-6, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." There is also a common prayer from Isaiah 62: 1, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." This spiritual focus upon Jerusalem and Zion generated

resonances in even non-political Jews when political Zionists began to speak of return.

At another level, some Jews feel Israel is or should be a recreation of the ancient Hebrew state, governed according to the Torah, with a powerful rabbinical (or priestly) voice in politics. Some even look to a Torah State--led by a descendent of David--and recapturing the ancient lands promised to Abraham in Genesis 15:19, the "Nile to Euphrates" promise. ("I give this land to you and your descendants, from the wadi of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates." A wadi is a river bed, this one being in the Sinai peninsula near Al Arish). This view is often linked to an anticipated arrival of the Messiah. The Netura Karta are so committed to this that they do not recognize Israel as "the" Jewish state, and consider present-day Israel a "blasphemy" that should not exist until the Messiah comes. The Gush Emunim (a group who settle on the West Bank for ideological reasons) emphasize the right of Jews to settle anywhere in "Eretz Israel." As one Gush Emunim leader said, "We did not come to Israel for peace, we came to fulfill prophecy." Other religious Jews have more modest goals, striving for an Israel that is governed by a secular government that takes into account religious traditions and obligations but in a way that acknowledges the reality of contemporary life. It would be unwise to generalize beyond this point. What we do know is that there are usually two to four religious parties in the Knesset, some run by rabbis, some by secular leaders committed to religious principles. Often these parties are at odds with each other and do not share a consensus.

The National Religious Party is the oldest of these parties. It is the only one not led by rabbis. Agudat Israel and Shas are two others, the first Ashkenazi, the second Sephardi. Every government coalition between 1948-1992 included a religious party.

Of Israeli Jews 5% are Haredim (Ultra Orthodox in American terminology); about 30% are observant in a traditional Orthodox manner and 15% vote for religious parties. Even so their power is exceptionally strong because the electoral law allows parties with only a small percentage of the vote to be represented in the Knesset. This means that any Prime Minister has to put together a coalition of several parties to reach the magical 50% plus 1 of Knesset members that enables a government to take and hold power. The Knesset has 120 members and seldom does the largest party exceed 40 or 45 seats. With 61 seats required for a majority, a prime minister with a majority of 64 seats may be hostage to a party with only 2-4 seats.

In 1988 during negotiations over the creation of a coalition government, Prime Minister Shamir made very controversial commitments to religious parties about economic support, extending of sabbath and other religious laws, and redefining of Israeli immigration law to exclude automatic admission to persons converted to Judaism by Conservative or Reform Rabbis. This last issue--called "Who is a Jew?"--provoked much controversy since it seemed to question the Jewish identity of



many American Jews and even the integrity of their rabbis.

### **Ethical Zionism:**

Many Jewish teachings emphasize concepts of justice. Even today when American Jews are asked what they basically mean when they say they are Jewish, they emphasize social justice issues. Among Zionists, this ethical tradition is most associated with a late 19th century writer known as Ahad Ha'am and with 20th century Israelis Martin Buber and Judah Magnes, who founded an Israeli political group called Ihud (it went out of existence in the 1960s). Ahad Ha'am believed Jews should go to Palestine and live in religious ethical communities where they would preserve the values of Judaism and serve as an example to others. He said, "I am more concerned about Judaism than about Jews." The key points of ethical Zionism are the following: a) justice is the key to Judaism. b) If Jews are saved but the principles are lost, then Judaism has been sacrificed. This would be a false victory. c) Because Jews live in a land where there are Palestinians, the destiny of the Jews and Palestinian people are intertwined. Jews will find their true destiny when they resolve this problem: to find justice for themselves and the Palestinians.

In the pre-state period, these Zionists advocated a "bi-national state" with Jewish and Arabic components linked together into one political system. More recently, they have been actively involved in social justice groups, human right monitoring groups, legal advocacy for accused Palestinians. They occupy the leftist position in the Israeli political spectrum.

### **Revisionist Zionism:**

This movement became prominent in Palestine in the 1930s when it openly broke with the mainstream Zionist movement. Its founder was Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky (a playwright whose play "Samson and Delilah" was made into a bad movie in the 1950s). Today it is found in the Likud and other nationalist parties in Israel. Others associated with the movement are Menachem Begin (who took over as leader after Jabotinsky died in 1940), Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, Raphael Eitan, and the late Rabbi Meir Kahane. They place a heavy emphasis on Jewish security, the belief that Jewish and Palestinian interests cannot be accommodated on an equal basis, and the demand that there be a Jewish monopoly on the instruments of power. They tend to favor Greater Israel beyond the 1967 borders, including perhaps Jordan. They are sometimes called "Gun Zionists" by critics because of their association with violence, both during the pre-state period and after. Their party is Likud. In the pre-state period, they were associated with Irgun and the Stern Gang, two violence-prone groups, the first headed by Begin, the second by Shamir.

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## **HERZL'S DER JUDENSTAAT**

Herzl grew up in a secular environment distant from the Jewish faith. He was driven by a concern for Jewish security rather than any other

broader goal. He was sufficiently obsessed with this concern that he often pursued false trails and unrealistic options. At one point he concluded that anti-Semitism was based in religious bigotry and suggested that Jews convert to Christianity to end it. He actually met with the Pope to suggest that he (Herzl) would head a conversion campaign if the Pope would endorse it. (Neither the Pope nor Jewish leaders were impressed.) In another incident Herzl conspired with a Scandinavian to overthrow the Ottoman empire. The Scandinavian had converted to Islam and owned a boat. He told Herzl that they could drive the boat into Istanbul harbor, bombard the Sultan's palace, and since he was a Muslim the Turks would accept him as ruler. Then he would give the Jews a homeland. Herzl actually contributed funds to this bizarre scheme.

### **The Uganda Scheme**

Britain acquired control of East Africa (today's Kenya and Uganda) in the 1890s and early 1900s. They were primarily interested in Uganda because it controlled the headwaters of the Nile. Kenya was merely the access route to the interior. Britain's first plan was to build a railroad from Mombasa to Kampala, an expensive project. To cut their costs, they wanted to put settlers into the Kenya highlands. Before settling in 1906 on English settlers, they considered two options: Indians and Jews. At one point they actually offered the Kenya highlands to the Zionist organization for Jewish settlement (this was called the Uganda Scheme, because the two lands were still governed out of Uganda's capital Kampala). Herzl supported this proposal but other Zionists opposed it and the plan failed. The Zionists affirmed that only Palestine was an acceptable location for the Jewish state. Another group of Jews called Territorialists tried to revive the scheme but it died. Some Zionists felt in retrospect that Britain's willingness to commit itself to a Jewish homeland (even in Africa) made it easier to commit to a homeland in Palestine. A phrase "antechamber to the homeland" captures the argument.

Herzl asked what was the true nature of the "Jewish question" (a 19th century term to describe the fact that there had been political and physical attacks upon Jews, the debate over why that was happening, and discussions of what the status of Jews should be). He notes that when Jews maintain their culture and stay separate they are disliked; when they assimilate culturally, they are disliked; when they are rich, they are disliked; when they are poor, they are disliked; when they are politically left, they are disliked; when they are politically right, they are disliked. He concludes that none of these apparent factors are truly causal. The simple fact is that the Jewish question is not merely one of religion or ethnicity or culture but of nationality. Jews are a national people living in someone else's country. They cannot be assimilated into other nations. The solution is national: Jews must separate and create a state of their own.

Herzl says his model is not utopian. He was not a dreamer. He had a specific strategy for creating a Jewish state. His model is "dialectical," meaning that forces generate opposite forces. It assumes that anti-Semitism (hostility to Jews) will be a pro-Zionist force. Those who hate Jews will be most in favor of creating a Jewish state. Hence he was willing to meet with viciously anti-Jewish officials in Russia to try to win support for his plan. In this he is similar to the Black nationalist

Marcus Garvey. In the 1920s and 1930s, Garvey tried to get Black Americans to return to Africa and saw the Ku Klux Klan as an ally in this endeavor. (Garvey was much criticized for these meetings, as was Herzl.) But Herzl's point is significant: he was not appealing to the sympathy or good will of European powers to support the idea of a Jewish state. He was appealing to their self-interest. To get the Jews out of their countries would end the social tensions surrounding their presence. And what leader would prefer social tension if there were an alternative? Herzl felt that in the end the rulers of Europe would become supporters of Jewish nationalism, regardless of whether or not they liked Jews.

Herzl has been criticized for the virtual non-reference to the Palestinian people and their rights. There are three things we can say about this. First, Herzl was convinced rather naively that the Palestinians would welcome a Jewish state because of the alleged benefits that would flow to them. Second, he felt Jewish settlers would represent the best of European civilization, practicing full inter-ethnic and inter-religious cooperation without any discrimination or oppression whatsoever. Certainly that would have been his own value system, growing up in the liberal, tolerant environment of 19th century Vienna. Third, the common white view of the day was that in Africa and the Middle East there were empty lands and the absence of private property. Indigenous peoples were pictured as wandering from place to place to cultivate crops or to watch their cattle. If in a given year they were shifted from one place to another, it was thought no real harm would be done. Thus the introduction of new populations would not displace any indigenous populations or create any tensions. This was how the British saw Kenya in 1903 when they introduced white settlers into the "empty" highlands, and it is how Jews saw Palestine. Israelis today complain that their actions are not seen in context, and that they are often held to a higher standard than other peoples. Certainly in this case, we can say Jewish nationalists of the day were no better, no worse, than other Europeans in how they viewed non-Europeans.

Herzl created a set of political and economic structures that were to be the organizational base of political Zionism. He created a Zionist bank (Bank Leumi), a land-purchase organization (The Jewish National Fund), and a political organization to link Jews together in the common national cause (The World Zionist Organization, with its branch the Jewish Agency). These organizations all exist today. Note that while Zionist organizations are dominated by Israelis, they are not Israeli organizations but are "Jewish" organizations, being owned and controlled by the Jewish people. This is a key Zionist concept--that there is no Israeli nationality but a Jewish nationality, with Israel being a country made up of part but not all the Jewish nation. Many organizations and structures in Israel are Zionist rather than Israeli.

In discussing Zionism, be alert to anti-Semitic analogies. There were historic conspiracy theories in Europe about secret organizations that manipulated power from behind the scenes. The Masons, the Luminari, the descendants of Jesus, and the Jews were all alleged at different times to be behind such secret organizations. In the late 19th century, Russian intelligence fabricated a book--*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*--that purported to be the minutes of meetings of a council of Jews that secretly plotted to control and direct world events.

Because the Zionist organizational structure was international, and because many Jews were vigorous supporters of its goals, some people confuse the phony *Protocols* with Herzl's *Der Judenstaat*. In fact, Zionist organizations operate in public, with offices, officers, budgets, and scheduled meetings. While some people may disagree with the goals of Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement and its organizations are not secret or conspiratorial and are not to be confused with fabricated defamations of the Jewish people.

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## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART III, LESSON THREE: FOUR TURNING POINTS

#### Teaching Strategy

- Students should be oriented to the concept of Historical Turning Points. They will do this by learning what happened in the four years featured in the Lesson. Use the Four Sevens gimmick to help them learn the dates. Question One in the Student Lesson (p. 45) lists specifics students should know.
- Review the maps of the Palestine Mandate (pre-1948), the UN partition plan of 1947, what Israel controlled after 1948, and what Israel controlled after 1967. Having these displayed somewhere in the room for others to see would be helpful. Someone might do a poster for extra credit.
- Feature population figures of Jews and Palestinians at various turning points. In the Jewish case, people are *coming in*, in the Palestinian case they are *going out*. Understanding the Palestinian situation can be enhanced if someone can generate a "Palestinian population map" to show where they live by proportion, across time. Perhaps a computer fanatic in class could generate a pie chart using the population figures provided. Alternately, a "Shifting Ratio" chart can show how the Jewish: Palestinian proportions changed across time (with dramatic shifts being indicators of fundamental historical turns; 1948 and 1967 would be critical). This could be put on a poster Time Line. Try to help students visualize the concept of political transformation as a measurable process.
- There are two Explanatory Models inherent in the Lesson: Ideology as a driving force, and Objective Conditions as a driving force. In a sense, these are opposing interpretations, but here we see that both contain some truth. Americans generally fall on the ideological side: we tend to believe historical outcomes occur because people of strong will and strong belief act on those beliefs. In other words, people debate and discuss, decide upon the "best" course of action, and act to modify or create reality. The alternative model suggests that people find themselves in situations they don't necessarily understand and didn't necessarily create, but they have to deal with the situation in front of them. Their actions and their beliefs are outgrowths of

reality rather than causes of it. The determination of Menachem Begin to settle the Occupied Territories might be an example of the first model: Begin "created facts," to use an Israeli term. The Intifada as an outgrowth of Israeli occupation might be an example of the second: political radicalization grew out of a situation, not out of some cultural or ideological desire to be radical. This is probably too complex to use as the focus of a classroom discussion, but you might be able to bring out these different explanations during your discussion.

- There are various UN documents in this Lesson. Reading those is informative. Also, students can discuss the role of the UN and of international law. We saw in Lesson One that the League of Nations functioned almost as a branch of British and French foreign policy, not as an independent neutral body. When students see the contrast between UN resolutions and UN policy, their first reaction is to think in moralistic terms, often using words like hypocrisy. Try to get them to think in terms of power: that nations do what they want to do and try to rationalize it later with moralistic statements of good motives. If we assume that power is the basis of politics, then why would the UN (or any government) say one thing but do something else? Would a dictatorship behave differently from democracy in this regard?
- The Jewish settlements are critical to current tensions and to future developments. You have maps of those settlements. Use them to show the difference between Labor and Likud (what Israelis call Strategic versus Political settlements). If you have a relief map of geographic Palestine, use that map to show how terrain is a factor in settlement. Use them to show how Jews and Arabs are now politically and physically face-to-face in a way that was not true in the past.

You should decide whether you want to discuss the role of US funds, public and private, in this process. A considerable amount of US financial support goes to Israel each year: nearly \$4.0 billion in regular aid, \$2.0 billion in subsidized loans per year for five years, about \$500 million a year in tax exempt monies raised through the United Jewish Appeal, \$1.2 billion in Israel bonds, etc. There are also sometimes aid supplements to assist with "special" problems such as the Lebanon War of 1982, and the near bankruptcy of the state in the mid-1980s, the Gulf War, and the redeployment of Israeli soldiers out of Gaza. US policy is that none of this money should be used to support settlements in the occupied territories; the Bush administration alleged that this provision was not being honored. They said American monies were "fungible" in that once they got into a resource pool any expenditure for settlements constituted an American subsidy for settlements regardless of which specific dollar was being spent. The Anti-Defamation League, in a letter to its supporters about US aid, has also written that "Israel's very survival is inextricably linked to America ... and how much it votes ... in the way of foreign aid."

If you can raise this issue (or if students raise it) you must be careful in how you address it. The issue is important because students are asked in Lesson Five to discuss what role the US

should play in this conflict, specifically the use of our aid. Students are also citizens who should be knowledgeable about public affairs so they can make informed decisions. This information facilitates both goals. Also, the US and Israel came to a near break in relations in 1991 and 1992 over settlements and whether the US should support a \$10 billion loan through congressional guarantees. An organized effort by Jewish communities across the nation to influence Congress led President Bush to make a public statement against "lobbyists" who threaten the proposed peace talks. The President's statement upset Jews and caused some Israeli and Jewish leaders to call the President an anti-Semite. US funding and Israeli settlements are critically relevant to the whole conflict and should be discussed. At the same time, you must be careful about how you cover this sensitive topic.

- Several discussion questions ask students to think about the American interest and American motives. Most Americans are ideologically pro-Israel and anti-Arab. If you conduct these discussions, try to get students to analyze independent of their predispositions. Sometimes pointing out how people think can help students become detached from their ideology. Public opinion polls show that when asked if they are more supportive of Israel or the Arabs, Americans overwhelmingly support Israel. When asked if they support Israel or Arab country X, the balance becomes more equal, even when X is the Palestinians. What we learn from this is that Americans react ideologically to the word Arab, seeing it in hostile terms. We also have hostile views of Islam, seeing it as irrational, violent, and oppressive of women. As students generate ideas about American interests, put them on the board, with cultural and national interest points listed separately (and cultural support and cultural opposition also separate). Question 10 about possible US military intervention in 1948 could theoretically generate the following points: It would cost American lives, we should spend the money on our cities, it would strengthen America against Russia, America is a world power that has an obligation to help in areas where there are crises, we should help the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, the Arabs were being driven out and we should have prevented that, the Arabs would have killed the Jews and we should not let them do that. These are a mixture of realpolitic/national interest reasons and cultural/moral reasons.
- Before teaching this, make sure you review the material from Lesson Four. It will be helpful and perhaps you can sneak in some coming information.
- Discussion Topic: The Intifada is triggered by a relatively minor traffic accident, in an atmosphere of extreme tension. Ask students to think of other cases where a minor incident triggers a mass reaction. Examples: In 1967 the Detroit riot (the most deadly in American history until 1992 in Los Angeles) was sparked by a routine police raid on an illegal after-hours drinking establishment (known locally as a Blind Pig). There was no police violence or abuse; the 1968 demonstrations that affected over 100 cities were sparked by the assassination of Martin Luther King; the 1970 student demonstrations that affected or

closed most American campuses were sparked by killings at Kent State and Jackson State; finally, the 1992 Los Angeles riot was sparked by the jury decision in the Rodney King beating case.

### Teacher Background

Suppose someone were writing a book on Protracted Intra-National Struggles (i.e., civil wars) rooted in ethnic, religious, or national communities. The book might have chapters on Northern Ireland, South Africa, Sudan, India, Sri Lanka. It would also almost certainly include a chapter on the Israel-Palestinian conflict. In each case, the author would probably outline for the reader the structure of the conflict and how that structure had changed across the decades. Such an outline would be devoid of any ethical or moral arguments about who is right or wrong.

What follows is how such a book might describe the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The focus is mostly on what happened from the time of the creation of a Jewish state. The discussion also focuses upon Israelis and Palestinians rather than Israelis and Arabs (i.e., especially upon what happened inside historic Palestine). This means certain major events in Israeli-Arab history are barely mentioned (the Suez War of 1956 and the War of 1973), since they were Arab-Israeli clashes, not Israeli-Palestinian.

It helps students to give them some focus in their study. There are four key turning points in this struggle (each ends with a 7, making it easier). The dates are 1947, 1967, 1977, and 1987. At each of these points, the nature of the struggle itself changed in such a way as to be fundamentally different from how it was before. These are forks in the road when history took a different path. Furthermore, in three of the four cases the change occurred in a way that can be measured, something that frees us from deciding who is right or wrong. Measured patterns are also not dependent upon personalities--whether Shamir or Rabin is prime minister of Israel, or whether we like Arafat.

**A Point of Confusion:** Students tend to get confused about the term Palestine. There is reason for this confusion. In 1920 the British used the term Palestine to mean the area on both sides of the Jordan River including Jordan; from 1922 to 1948 Palestine meant everything west of the Jordan River, but not including Jordan; today it means the areas under Israeli occupation (though some people still use the term to mean the geographic area west of the Jordan River, including Israel and the Palestinian territories). In addition, the Occupied Territories have three parts: the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. The maps show how these terms evolved.

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### THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE: 1947

In 1936 Palestinians began what is called the Arab Uprising against British colonial authority in Palestine. By 1939, 2287 Arabs, 520 Jews, and 140 Britons had been killed (many scholars believe the true number of Arab deaths is much higher than reported). Also, in what to



Palestinians is a double tragedy, Palestinian factions turned on each other later in the revolt so that many Arab deaths were at the hands of other Arabs. In 1937, Britain set up a commission to make recommendations. The Peel Report concluded that Jews and Arabs could never live peacefully together in one state and suggested that Britain partition Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab, with an international enclave around Jerusalem, including Bethlehem. The report casually suggested that a large number of Palestinians (up to 250,000) be forcefully removed from the area of the proposed Jewish state. (The area was the Galilee. The reason Galilee would be Jewish was to give the Jewish state control of the headwaters of the Jordan River, an issue of continuing controversy and tension between Israel and its neighbors, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria). The report was very controversial and before anything could be done World War II intervened. As the war ended, Jewish leaders in Palestine--upset that Britain had limited the number of Jewish refugees that could go to Palestine during the war--began a military campaign to expel Britain. Although much weakened by the war, Britain shifted 80,000 soldiers to Palestine to control the situation but they were not successful. Jewish resistance culminated in the 1946 attack on Jerusalem's King David Hotel, which was used by Britain as its military headquarters. Eighty-eight British soldiers and military employees were killed in this attack, carried out by Menachem Begin and his Irgun Zvai Leumi (Irgun for short) guerrillas.

It is hard to see how a war could have been avoided. As the British Foreign Minister said in February, 1947: "There are in Palestine about 1,200,000 Arabs and 600,000 Jews. For the Jews, the essential point of principle is creation of a sovereign Jewish state. For the Arabs, the essential point of principle is to resist, up to the last, establishment of Jewish sovereignty in any part of Palestine."

When the dust settled in January, 1949 a Jewish state was in place but no Arab state. Three things had happened to the land allocated to the Palestinian state: 1) during the fighting Israel had captured some of the Arab territory (for instance, the area around Lydda and Ramle--or Lod as it is now called). 2) Jordan held onto positions it had protected in what is today called the West Bank. In 1949 Jordan annexed the West Bank, granted full citizenship to the Palestinians therein, and changed its official name from Transjordan to Jordan. While some Palestinians agreed to this arrangement (for example the heads of the Nashashibi and Dajani families), other Palestinian nationalists were so offended by the annexation that they became bitter enemies of the Jordanian ruling family (the Hashemites). One Palestinian extremist assassinated King Abdullah in 1951; later militant groups attempted an uprising against King Hussein in 1970 (the famous Black September Uprising). 3) A small portion of Palestinian territory (the Gaza Strip) was held by Egypt after the fighting ceased and governed by it until 1967. Egypt never annexed Gaza. It was taken by Israel in the 1967 war and is today a part of the Israeli-Occupied Territory.

The creation of a Jewish state resolved one of the major human and political problems of the modern era: the statelessness of the Jewish people. Never again would a Jew under attack be without a place to go for refuge. By 1964, 888,000 Jews came into the new state. Some of these were refugees from World War II; some were pious Jews

from Arab states who simply wanted to live in the Holy Land (this was true of many from Morocco); some were pressured to leave by the fact that local Jewish populations in the Arab world were somehow blamed for Israeli actions against Arabs and were now viewed as a possibly disloyal fifth column; and some were Jews getting away from oppressive governments that abused both Jewish and non-Jewish citizens (this was the case in Yemen where a feudal government was still in power). To the surprise of some Zionist leaders, few Jews from America or Western Europe moved to Israel. Sixty-one percent of those who arrived between 1948-64 were from the Arab world. This created ethnic tensions between the Israeli leaders (almost entirely East European in origin) and the majority Sephardi population. Even today, the Sephardim are disproportionately in the working and lower middle classes. Few Sephardi politicians have achieved national prominence (David Levy was Foreign Minister under Shamir and Yitzhak Navon was President in the early 1980's. Both are of Moroccan origin).

### **A Difficult Topic: The Iraqi Jews:**

The case of the 130,000 Iraqi Jews deserves a special note. They were an ancient, successful community concentrated in Baghdad. The authoritarian Iraqi government was very hostile to the new Jewish state and its supporters and passed a law requiring that Jews who wished to emigrate renounce their citizenship in writing before March 1951 or lose the right to leave. No more than 10,000 did so, some wishing to remain in the land of their birth, others fearing a trap to smoke out Zionists. When bombs exploded in Jewish neighborhoods panic set in and all but 5,000 left. No one ever proved who set off those bombs -- Iraqi extremists are one possibility -- but radical Sephardic Jews in Israel charged that Israeli agents were responsible. The alleged motive was to panic the talented Iraqi Jews into going to Israel to swell the population and help build the new Jewish state. These charges were publicized by a variety of sources from David Hirst, respected correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, to a militant group called the Black Panthers. The Black Panthers say that European Jews dominate Israel and that Jews from the Arab world are less than second class citizens. While these are not mainstream views, they are heard in Israeli political debates even today. Black Panther leader Charlie Bitton is still active in Israeli politics and Foreign Minister David Levy (of Jewish Moroccan origin) temporarily stepped down in 1992, alleging that racist Western Jews in Likud treated him like a "monkey" who just got out of a tree.

The charges of Israeli complicity in the bombings have never been proven and one Israeli politician named in print as one of the alleged bombers won a libel case against the reporter. Still, the allegations reveal serious tensions that sometimes exist between Western and non-Western Jews. Since Jews of non-Western Sephardic origin constitute an absolute majority of Israeli Jews, the issue must be treated seriously but with sensitivity. Many Americans who have never heard these charges and who think of 1948 in terms of Jewish survival find it inconceivable that Jews could do such things to other Jews and are distressed by the very mention of accusations. At the same time, many Arab intellectuals are aware of the allegations and grant them credibility. Historians tend to dance around the legal issue by reporting the charges and avoiding conclusions of what is true. This is probably

not a topic to raise, but if it comes up, perhaps the best approach would be to summarize the issues, say the allegations are denied by those involved but are still believed by some accusers, and point out that today the real significance of the debate is that it reveals deep fissures within the Israeli political system between Western and non-Western Jews.

For more information on the Sephardic Jews of Israel, see Shlomo Swirsky, *The Oriental Majority*. For information on the Black Panthers, see Schnall, *Radical Dissent in Israel*. For summaries of the bombing allegations, see Segev in the bibliography and David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*.

## **Jewish Cultural Groups**

The Jews of European origin are called Ashkenazi, the Jews from the Arab word Sephardi (in both cases the plural is formed by adding the letter "m" to the end). In meaning, Ashkenazi refers to Germany and Sephardi refers to Spain. Both words come from references in the Bible which the rabbis decided referred to those two countries. Historically, the Jews of Germany were the most advanced Jews in Europe and spread their teaching and German dialect (Yiddish) throughout the continent; likewise, the Jews of Spain were the most advanced Jews in the Arab world and spread their Spanish dialect (Ladino) throughout the Arab world. There are other Jewish cultural groups (Persian for example) but the overwhelming number of all world Jews are from one of these two cultural sub-groups. Many Americans are not aware that Spain was once part of the Arab world, indeed, at one time perhaps the most advanced part of the Arab world. Muslims and Jews were expelled in 1492 when Spain was reunited under Catholic leadership and the power of the Arab leaders--called Moors--was broken. The last Arab province was Andalusia (or Granada) in the south.

## **Palestinian Refugees**

There is intense rhetoric involving the tragic events of 1948. Palestinians have argued that there is a systematic campaign of mass expulsion by Israelis. Israelis have alleged that the refugees left of their own will, often with Israelis begging them to stay. They also say there was a plan among Arab states to move the Palestinians out during the fighting with the understanding that after the Jews had been massacred, the Palestinians would be allowed to return and take the vacated property. Claims that there were radio broadcasts from Arab capitals urging Arabs to flee Palestine have never been documented by independent scholarship. Regarding mass expulsion, this was definitely included in Britain's 1937 partition plan and was included in Britain's Labour Party platform of 1945.

Recent Israeli scholarship shows several patterns of departure: 1. When the fighting began many wealthy families temporarily moved women and children across the border for reasons of safety. 2. Many poorer Palestinians fled the fighting or went to visit relatives in Jordan or elsewhere. 3. There were some forced evacuations. Around Lydda and Ramle 50,000 persons were forced at gunpoint to leave. Yitzhak Rabin acknowledged participating in this forced evacuation. 4. After the April 1948 massacre at Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem, there was

mass panic. That was when 254 Palestinians--mostly unarmed women, children, and old men were killed at night in their village (the Israelis lost four). The assault was led by Menachem Begin's Irgun; panic came upon Palestinians amidst rumors that more massacres were to occur. Yigael Allon reported that he encouraged such rumors. (See Segev and Morris.) See also the memoirs of Golda Meir and Menachem Begin for differing Israeli perspectives. Meir says that in April, 1948 (when the massacre of Deir Yassin occurred) she personally "stood on the beach in Haifa for hours and literally beseeched the Arabs of that city not to leave" (p. 279); Begin's memoirs on the same time says reports of the Deir Yassin attack produced "a maddened, uncontrollable stampede. Of the about 800,000 Arabs who lived on the present territory of the State of Israel, only some 165,000 are still there. The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated" (p. 164). Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, supports an expulsion thesis. Professor Walid Khalidi (*Journal of Palestine Studies*, Autumn, 1988) analyzes and reproduces Israeli military documents (Plan Dalat and Plan Gimel) that address these topics.

The UNRWA uses the following definition of refugee for its administrative purposes: "A Palestinian refugee is a person whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years preceding the conflict in 1948, and who, as a result of this conflict, lost both his home and his means of livelihood and took refuge in one of the countries where UNRWA provides relief. Refugees within this definition and the direct descendants of such refugees are eligible for Agency assistance if they are: registered with UNRWA; living in the area of UNRWA operations; and in need."

### **Palestinians in Arab Lands**

In Jordan today perhaps 60% of the population are of Palestinian origin, and perhaps 20% of these live in refugee camps. In Lebanon, perhaps 10% of the population (400,000) are Palestinian. Even in the West Bank about 40% are refugees and in tiny Gaza the figure approaches 90%. The children and grandchildren of refugees have refugee status. Although most refugees are self-supporting (even in refugee camps), many still live in poverty and are dependent upon the United Nations for assistance. In many places they are politically vulnerable to hostile elements inside their host countries. Many Palestinians have been killed in Lebanon and Jordan, and the Israeli Occupied Territories. And as mentioned, only in Jordan has there been a broad grant of citizenship, so mostly they have little political voice and remain at the pleasure of their host country. During and after the Gulf War, 90% of those in Kuwait (over 350,000 in 1990) were expelled or forced to leave and not allowed to return or remain in liberated Kuwait. The Kuwaiti Palestinians were perhaps the most educated and wealthiest of all Palestinian communities. Note: a large percentage of the Palestinians do not want to accept another citizenship since it might suggest their claim to citizenship in a Palestinian state was being abandoned. The PLO has put its energies into getting internationally-recognized travel documents and non-discriminatory residency rights for refugees, rather than citizenship.

As a rule those in camps are politically very militant. In 1970 they were

involved in an uprising against King Hussein. This "Black September" uprising (so called because many Palestinians were killed in it) prompted the United States to prepare for military intervention to save King Hussein when Syria intervened on the side of the Palestinians. In Lebanon, the camps have likewise been the center of political militancy since 1970 when refugee soldiers from Jordan moved into Lebanon. In 1982 two camps--Sabra and Shatilla--were the center of brutal massacres conducted by Lebanese Maronite (Christian) forces at a time when the camps were under Israeli military jurisdiction. The Israeli Kahan Commission blamed key Israeli leaders for complicity in these killings for their failure to act to prevent them. Estimates are that more than 800 Palestinians were killed, with no losses to attacking soldiers (some estimates of Palestinian deaths reach 2,400). These massacres occurred after Palestinian guerrillas had been evacuated to Tunis under an international agreement negotiated and guaranteed by the United States. Marines went into Beirut twice: first to oversee the evacuation, second after the Sabra and Chatilla massacres.

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## THE SIX DAY WAR: 1967

### Results of Occupation

This unit has steered away from stories of violence experienced by both sides, which may be inflammatory and detract from the goal of analysis and understanding. However, there are some aspects of the post 1967 occupation that are important for students to know since they have shaped the perceptions of each side. Since 1967 the Israeli government has taken control, through various methods, of land that was owned by Palestinians. Usually this has occurred without due compensation, and sometimes with forged documents. Palestinians often appeal against the confiscation of their land in Israeli courts, but the law is written in such a way that they have seldom prevailed. Over 52% of the land in the West Bank and close to 40% of the land in Gaza has come under Israeli control since 1967. This has seriously affected the Palestinians' ability to earn a living since farmland that used to be available is now gone. In addition, houses were demolished if there was a "suspected" culprit. (The house could be blown up *before* a trial took place; recently the rules have changed so that a legal process should take place first.)

Immediately after the end of hostilities, there were many forced expulsions of Palestinians to other countries. Most of the prominent leadership was included in the ouster (the Mayor of Jerusalem, the President of a University, the Head of the Islamic Waqf, an activist Episcopal priest [later a bishop], newspaper publishers, doctors and lawyers). They were spirited across the border, without a judicial process. Israel says that they posed a threat to the security of the state. Expulsion is a highly emotional issue for Palestinians.

In addition, there have been many instances of what the Palestinians consider "collective punishments," such as the closure of schools, and the long curfews, some for days at a time, which means that those with jobs cannot get to their jobs, those with farm animals cannot feed them, and those with crops cannot care for or harvest them. The Palestinians (and almost the entire world community) claim that the

deeds mentioned above are all forbidden by international law (specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which Israel has signed). Israel claims that, while they support the Geneva Convention, it does not apply to their occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

It is important for students to remember that these problems started immediately with the occupation in 1967, not with the Intifada of 1987. By now there are many Palestinian families who have experienced personal tragedies. There are likewise many Israeli families who have reason to be afraid of Palestinians. Almost all young men and women in Israel serve in the reserves, and many have spent time in the West Bank and Gaza, where they experience daily hostility. Many come back with nightmares, and Israeli authorities are concerned at the increased amount of wife and child abuse, divorce, substance abuse, murder and suicide that has entered Israeli society, presumably because of the experiences of the soldiers enforcing the occupation. Similar problems are evident in Palestinians society.

### **Who Started the 1967 War?**

There is still acrimonious debate over who started the war. This is no doubt about the first strike: Israel attacked and destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground. As one Arab observer said, "It was not a six-day war. It was a six-hour war. The Egyptian air force was destroyed by noon of the first day and then it was a five-and-a-half day mopping up operation."

It was an exaggeration, but it made the point.

The best we can do now is to summarize the issue and the perspectives of various combatants. In addition to issues listed elsewhere, three other factors are sometimes cited. Let us call them Pushing and Shoving, Verbal Belligerence, and Possible Israeli Territorial Desires.

**Pushing and Shoving:** Two Events are often cited as setting the stage for war: Nasser's decision to remove UN forces from the Sinai and his decision to close the Straits of Tiran (the mouth of the Red Sea) at Sharm-el-Sheikh to Israeli shipping. To Nasser these were matters of Egyptian sovereignty: Egypt owned the Sinai and should not have UN troops in its territory. Also, the mouth of the straits were Egyptian territorial waters and Egypt should not be forced to allow ships from an enemy country (Israel) to pass through. To Nasser, these limitations were leftovers from the 1956 Suez war. In the nationalist environment of the day. Egypt considered them imperialist in nature. And, as Egypt pointed out, Israel had refused in 1956 to allow UN peacekeeping troops to be positioned on its side of the border.

From Israel's point of view, a closure of the Straits would cut Israel off from its oil source in Iran and from much of its trade with East Africa and the Orient. This was not a fatal blow since most Israeli trade came through its Mediterranean ports and shipments could be rerouted. But closure and rerouting would cost money and would be a blow to Israeli prestige. Israel also noted that under international law, the Straits were to be open waters. Nasser's decision to order UN forces out of the Sinai and to seize Sharm-el-Sheikh was thus seen as hostile.

Palestinian *fedayeen* (commandos) associated with Fatah had also been conducting raids into Israeli territory from Egypt and Jordan. The Egyptian-controlled PLO was verbally aggressive but was not primarily a military body. The creation of Fatah by Yasser Arafat and others changed this situation and introduced a meaningful armed struggle into Palestinian strategy. Israel reacted to Fatah strikes with strong raids into Gaza and Jordan. Since Israel blamed Fatah's host countries for the raids, their retaliation often struck national armies rather than Palestinian positions. Some of these strikes were criticized even in Israel for being stronger than necessary. These ongoing clashes caused loss of life on all sides and escalated tension. In the north, a face-off occurred. In the 1948 armistice created a neutral zone between Israel and Syria which was not to be unilaterally changed. This zone was at the base of Syria's Golan province bordering Israel's Huleh Valley. Israel had violated the agreement by introducing settlers into the zone. The Syrians had violated it by shelling the Huleh Valley and the more distant Galilee. Both parties claimed to be acting defensively but both were contributing to an environment that made war more likely.

**Verbal Belligerency:** In the weeks before the war, verbal attacks escalated. On the Israeli side, there were statements suggesting that Israel had decided to attack Damascus itself. A May 12 UP story reported that "a highly placed Israeli source said here today that if Syria continued the campaign of sabotage in Israel it would immediately provoke military action aimed at overthrowing the Syrian regime." The story of an anticipated Israeli attack on Syria was widely reported in the Arab world and was given credibility in Moscow, although not in the US. Credible or not, it put pressure on Nasser, the Arab Champion, to rally to Syria's defense. Nasser cited a desire to defend Syria as a reason why Egypt mobilized; the decision of Syria and Egypt to join their armies under one command was linked to this. For his part, Nasser made several statements that contributed to an environment of escalation. He said May 26 that the goal of the coming battle "will be a general one and our basic objective will be to destroy Israel." On other occasions he spoke of returning to the situation before 1948. (See Laqueur, 89 and 380). Also, Egypt has long felt that having the Negev under Israeli control split the Arab world (Egypt and Jordan) and should be reversed. On the other hand Yitzhak Rabin, head of Israeli forces in 1967, told *Le Monde* later that "I do not think Nasser wanted war. His forces were not sufficient. He knew it and we knew it."

Did Egypt really hope to reverse the 1948 creation of a Jewish state or even "drive the Jews into the sea"? Did Israel plan to attack Damascus itself and overthrow the Syrian regime? Certainly all parties contributed to an environment of fear in which others were seen as mobilizing for some apocalyptic assault. In terms of students, this might be a good point how militant words can achieve a life of their own and can drive events beyond rational thinking.

**Allegations of Israeli Territorial Designs:** Israelis have insisted that in 1967 they were forced into war and took land defensively. But not all Israelis were reluctant to expand their boundaries. The question historians must answer is whether Israel *wanted* to acquire the land they ended up holding: the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, part of the

Golan province, and the headwaters of the Jordan River, not to mention the west bank of the Jordan River itself. Certainly Israeli leaders felt their 1948 borders left them with scant breathing space and inadequate security. David Ben-Gurion had suggested in pre-Suez deliberations in 1956 that Jordan be partitioned "with the West Bank going as an autonomous region to Israel and the east bank to Iraq. Lebanon would lose its territory up to the Litani River to Israel and certain other parts would go up to Syria with the remaining territory becoming a Christian state. A pro-Western leader would be installed in Damascus. Israel would also take Sharm-el-Sheikh at the tip of the Sinai peninsula from Egypt." (Neff, 1981: 342-43). Smith adds that in 1967 Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol "if possible wanted to gain control of the headwaters of the Jordan River" (p. 201).

There were also Israelis motivated by religio-nationalist ideology who felt that land beyond the border belonged to the Jewish people as a birthright. Isaac says that the Revisionists (today Likud) "had never fully accepted the boundaries established by the 1949 armistice" and retained the motto "Israel on both sides of the Jordan". Begin's Herut party as late as 1965 had an election plank that "the right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel in its historical completeness is an eternal and inalienable right," and Begin joined the ruling coalition just before the war. The famous "Zionist Map" used by Jewish leaders during post-World War I negotiations to define their proposed boundaries included all the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, north to include Lebanon's Litani River and Syria's Mount Hermon, east into Jordan up to the desert. Isaac says the "greatest disappointment" of these early Zionists was the loss of the Litani, for which Zionist leaders fought most stubbornly since it was to provide the water which could be channeled to make the deserts bloom and to create the power for industrial development." Until 1948 Shamir's party, now part of Likud, included the boundaries of Genesis 15:18 (the so-called Nile-to-Euphrates promise) in its platform (See Isaac, chapter 2).

**The Case of Jordan:** A final issue is the role of Jordan. Jordan was the weak sister of the region, a small country surrounded by powerful neighbors. Nasser had been openly hostile to the Jordanian regime, speaking of King Hussein with contempt and questioning whether Jordan even had the right to exist. Jordan's inclination was to remain neutral, which it did at the beginning of the war. But Jordan had a defense treaty with Egypt and was obligated to enter the conflict. This entry cost them control of East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Three interesting anecdotes are relevant: First, the Israelis asked Jordan to stay neutral and said that had Jordan stayed out they would not have seized Jordanian territory, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Second, King Hussein spoke to Nasser by bugged telephone to ask how the war was going. Nasser told him that Egyptian forces were advancing on all fronts and that the Israelis were falling back. In fact, Nasser knowingly lied. At the time he spoke the Egyptian air force was destroyed and Egyptian units were being crushed in the Sinai. Jordan entered a war that had already been lost. Third, King Hussein was asked in the mid-1970s what he felt was the greatest mistake of his reign. He cited two: entering the 1967 war, which cost him East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and staying out of the 1973 war, which denied him the right to be part of the post-war disengagement accords.



There is no true answer to the question: Who was responsible for the war? We can only observe that there were a mix of motives on all sides, including legitimate defense and definite aggressiveness, and that an environment of belligerency and fear led to a war. Rather than deciding who was responsible, the unit focuses upon how this war between Israel and its Arab neighbors changed the nature of the domestic conflict between Israelis and Palestinians by reuniting historic Palestine, and putting Israelis and Palestinians face to face under a single regime.

Other sources: Walter Laqueur, *Road to War*, Donald Neff, *Warriors for Jerusalem*; David Bowen and Laura Drake, "The Syrian-Israeli Border Conflict, 1949-1967," *Middle East Policy* (V1, 1992).

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## BEGIN BECOMES PRIME MINISTER: 1977

The events of 1977 are called "the earthquake" by Israelis. The election of that year was won by Menachem Begin's nationalist Likud party. Begin had always been considered too militant and extremist for most Israelis. During Knesset debates David Ben-Gurion would not even refer to Begin by name but would speak of "the member sitting next to Mr. Burg."

Leaving aside what Israeli politicians call each other, Begin was different from previous Prime Ministers in his commitment to hold onto the Occupied Territories permanently, and to settle them with Jewish populations. He felt the land belonged to the Jewish people and always referred to it as Eretz Israel. His followers vigorously resist the term "Occupied Territories." In cooperation with Ariel Sharon and various religious militants (the best known being Gush Emunim--the Block of the Faithful) he began an aggressive settlement campaign that by 1990 had taken half of the land of the West Bank, 1/3 of Gaza, and had placed 129,000 Jews in and around East Jerusalem in traditionally Palestinian land. (Source: US State Department). Jews also returned to traditional Jewish neighborhoods in old Jerusalem and Hebron.

Settlements had started under the Labour government before 1977 but Labour policy was philosophically different from Likud. While Labour had sometimes cooperated with religious settlers, the thrust of their policy had focused upon security settlements along the Jordan River and on the strategic high points in the West Bank and the Golan province. Labour had carefully avoided the dense population centers of the West Bank and Gaza. For more information on this transition from Labour to Likud, see Ibrahim Mattar, "Israeli Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Autumn, 1981.

Likud placed settlements in the very centers of population, particularly in the line running from Jerusalem north through Ramallah to Nablus, and in the line running from Jerusalem south past Bethlehem to Hebron. Settlements were often positioned in "bloks" (Gush in Hebrew) to surround key cities or to be on key roads. This was intended to facilitate military and territorial control. (On the settlement

map in the student edition, look at settlements near the cities of Nablus, Hebron, and Bethlehem, and at the roads between key cities.) In the event of an uprising every road would be cut off and every Palestinian population center surrounded. As Raphael Eitan (former head of the Israeli military, now head of the Tsomet party) said, Palestinians would be like cockroaches in a bottle.

Likud also began putting settlements into the Muslim and Christian Quarters of Old Jerusalem. Labour had expanded the borders of the city well beyond what they had ever been and had created an outer ring of settlements around the city. This in itself had been very controversial. But by traditional agreement among the religious groups, each Quarter of Jerusalem had some measure of self-government, and residence was limited to members of that religious community. Exceptions had to be approved by the religious leaders. Labour had not violated this "Status Quo Agreement," as it is called. But Likud had used religious militants funded by government monies (and often private American contributions) to acquire numerous properties in the Old City. Sometimes "purchases" were fraudulent, with the Israeli purchaser knowingly "buying" from a collaborator who did not have title to the property. These acquisitions were confrontational and led to an escalation of tensions with Muslim and Christian Palestinians.

To Americans the religious nature of the Quarters may seem discriminatory but that is not the logic of the agreement. Religion in Jerusalem is not just a matter of theology but also of community. While we Americans think of individual rights, in Jerusalem they are also concerned about *group* rights. Such rights have been traditionally recognized and are maintained by law. Because of the special nature of Jerusalem (holy to three faiths) cooperation is required and each group has to have areas that it runs in its own way. Someone who wanted to live in another Quarter (for example a Muslim who wanted to move into the Christian Quarter) could petition the Christian authorities for a waiver. Waivers are granted with the proviso that when property is re-sold the authorities have right of first refusal.

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## THE INTIFADA: 1987

On December 8, 1987 in Gaza an auto accident occurred that took the lives of four Palestinians. An Israeli vehicle crashed into a crowd of people in Gaza's Jabalya refugee camp. Palestinians were convinced that the crash had been intentional and even reported that the driver had shouted at the crowd as he drove into them. Police investigation of the incident concluded that it was a legitimate accident with no malicious intent. In a sense the cause of the accident is irrelevant. When Trotsky started his famous revolutionary newspaper in the beginning of the century he named it *Iskra* (The Spark) for good reason. He said that when tension in a society reaches a certain level a small incident of no true significance can be the incident that sparks an uprising. People will point to the incident as if it were causal, but it is not. The political environment and the level of social injustice are the key explanatory factors.

Intifada is pronounced in-tee-fah-da, with the emphasis on the third

syllable. The word means "shaking off." A Palestinian poet used the following example to explain the root meaning of the word: imagine you are sitting in a chair and someone comes up behind you and puts his arms around your arms as if to restrain you. You jump up and throw your arms out to break the person's grip. This could be called Intifada. Ironically, the word was used in 1984 to describe the revolt of certain Fatah military commanders against Arafat's leadership. Palestinians also call it "The Blessed Intifada". It is called this because it came at a time of much despair when Palestinian leaders had been driven out of the region into Tunis, when the Shamir government was pressing ahead with land confiscations and Jewish settlements, when America and Europe seemed willing to go along with what was happening, and when the Arab leaders seemed more interested in the Iran-Iraq war than Palestine. It was also admired because of the fact that Palestinian youth play a major role in resistance activities, and that initially at least, the Intifada relied upon mass protests rather than guerrilla attacks.

The Intifada is one of the critical events in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Future historians will look back on it as a major turning point. Several things came out of the Intifada.

1. Power in the Palestinian nationalist movement was shifted away from the armed groups overseas to the leadership in the Occupied Territories. Local leaders were far more realistic than some of the exiled leaders.
2. There were five major parties or groups among local Palestinians: Arafat's Fatah, George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Naif Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Communist Party, and the Islamic Groups (mostly HAMAS and Islamic Jihad). For the first time, these came together into The Unified Leadership of the Uprising (although the Islamic groups soon dropped out). The Unified Leadership began to issue "leaflets" that would appear mysteriously in towns advising activists on theory and strategy.
3. Radicalized populations: Previous resistance had been led by the "usual suspects"--unionists, student activists, urban militants. Merchants, rural people, and intellectuals had been less involved. The Intifada changed that. The merchants became one of the most supportive of all groups, holding regular strikes. Christians and other Palestinian minorities got involved, and the villages became the hard core. The settlement policy in particular had convinced all farmers that they were personally threatened. Their lost lands, and the threat of lost lands radicalized them so that the Intifada became a national uprising.
4. In November, 1988 the PNC (Palestinian National Congress--the parliament of the Palestinian people and the major legislative body of the PLO) met in Algiers. After some debate the delegates voted 85-15% to accept the partition of Palestine based on UN Resolution 181, recognize Israel, renounce terrorism, and call for a negotiated settlement based on UN Resolution 242 and 338. They also declared Palestine to be an independent state. Various officials said that the territory of the state would be the West Bank and Gaza and that its capital

would be East Jerusalem. While some radicals opposed this resolution--arguing that Israel was not serious about negotiating and would never agree to the partitioning of Palestine--the vote passed and the radicals agreed not to resist with violence. The US quickly opened up dialogue with the PLO (broken off some months later when armed Palestinians landed on a beach near Tel Aviv).

5. While Israel is strong enough to defeat any coalition of enemy states the Intifada showed that Israel cannot control a mass Palestinian population that does not accept its authority. In short, the Palestinian territories are not governable, by Israel or Jordan. In 1988 Jordan repudiated any claim to the West Bank. The Israelis also soon came to realize the costs of occupation. At one time, there were more soldiers in the territories than it took to conquer them in 1967, and there were more soldiers based in Gaza than there were Jewish settlers. The financial costs of the occupation soared; serious US-Israeli tensions emerged over the settlements; hundreds of Israeli soldiers protested, and human rights groups criticized Israeli policies, as did some Jewish groups. Measurable social tensions increased among both Israelis and Palestinians, including spouse abuse, substance abuse, violence, suicide.
6. In 1990-91 the Gulf War occurred and in October 1991, talks began at Madrid that brought together Israelis, Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinians, and Lebanese. Holding such talks was a major US policy goal and would not have started without vigorous and persistent urging by the US; however, they are not entirely the result of American pressure. (The talks are of two types: bilateral between Israel and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinians, and multilateral on five functional issues: water, refugees, environment, economic development, and security.) The Israelis and Palestinians both have reasons for being interested in a settlement. While the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank are not powerful enough to expel the Israeli army, they are at the same time too powerful to be defeated. The occupation has become costly to Israel. Constant mobilization has damaged the economy; the conflict has polarized Israeli society into right and left wings and has generated domestic tensions; violence-prone Israeli vigilante groups defy the government; it has damaged Israel's overseas alliances. It is a mistake to think Israel is now negotiating because of US pressure. Its own agenda is a factor as well.
7. Population of Jerusalem: In 1967 there were 266,000 people of whom 74% were Jewish; in 1990 there are 555,000 people of whom 72% are Jewish. Jews in East Jerusalem have gone from zero in 1967 to 135,000 in 1990. In the Old City itself there are 28,100 people including 2,600 Israelis in the Jewish Quarter, 19,000 Muslims, and 6,500 Christians.

### **A Problem and a Resource**

American culture appears to have exceptional levels of anti-Arab and anti-Islamic prejudice, complicated by the fact that few Americans have Muslim or Arab friends. If you find this in your class, you might

want to use the enclosed story by Wafa Unis Shuraydi on page 52. She was a refugee from Lebanon in the 1970s and is now a teacher in Dearborn, Michigan. Her simple yet profound story shows the natural modesty of Muslim girls and also the problems of Arab immigrants in America. Since she writes initially from the perspective of a girl of 15, your students can relate to her.

## Human Rights Issues

Numerous groups monitor human rights issues throughout the world. Amnesty International (AI), which won a Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts, is one of these. AI reports serious human rights violations by Israeli authorities in the Occupied Territories. Below are some major areas of AI concern with explanatory discussion. The students have an excerpt from the report, and some data.

**Administrative Detention:** These are persons arrested without ever being charged or even told that they violated a law. Many are political leaders. Some are professors, teachers, peace activists, reporters, doctors, union leaders. AI considers many of these to be Prisoners of Conscience, a special category that they reserve for people who have committed no crime but are under arrest for exercising rights (such as disagreeing with government authorities) that are considered normal under international law.

**Demolitions and Sealings:** When a member of a family commits an act of sabotage or violence, authorities often demolish or seal the home of that person. (Sealing consists of cementing up doors and windows.) AI considers this a human rights violation since other members of the family did not commit whatever act occurred. About 90 demolitions/sealings occurred. There is an Israeli human rights group that protests demolitions by sending support delegations and assistance--blankets, food, etc.--to the families of those whose homes are destroyed.

**Deportations:** Deporting Palestinians to other countries is considered unacceptable by AI. The Fourth Geneva Agreement (1949), which was signed by Israel although Israel denies that it applies to its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, specifies that occupying powers should not deport populations. Observers who hear Israeli militants speak of mass expulsions fear that initial expulsions (for example the 415 deported in late 1992) might be just the beginning. To Palestinians, expulsion is their psychic nightmare drawn from the experience of 1948. They react to talk of expulsion the way Japanese may react to talk of nuclear war.

**Curfew Days:** Frequently whole towns or even whole provinces will be put under curfew so that people cannot go out of their homes. During the 1991 Gulf War almost the whole of the Occupied Territories was under curfew for five weeks, almost uninterrupted. Such curfews are exceptional hardships on families, who could not plant or harvest, feed livestock, work, buy food, attend school, or attend to medical emergencies.

**Intra-Communal fighting:** According to Palestinian sources, 170 Palestinians were killed by other Palestinians in various disputes. Israelis put the number considerably higher. Some of these are

executions of alleged collaborators believed to work secretly for Israeli security forces. (In the past, Israel has acknowledged that about half of those killed did indeed have links to their security forces.) Other killings are factional disputes between supporters of different parties or military groups. The PLO has condemned these killings and tried to mediate between the factions.

**Population Figures:** Population figures in the Student Section, p. 46, may be confusing. Here is an explanation of the sources.

The first three rows are from the *Israeli Statistical Abstract* of 1992. The total population figures of 5,090,000 includes Israel proper and a combined (East and West) Jerusalem total of 578,000. Israel says 18.1% of its total population is non-Jewish and in Jerusalem 28% is non-Jewish. They say there are 130,000 Christians in all of Israel, including Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem itself there are 14,700 Christians. Since the *Statistical Abstract* does not distinguish between East and West Jerusalem, the East/West figures are extrapolations from other sources. Figures for East Jerusalem are from the Foundation for Middle East Peace (July, 1992).

Israel estimates there are 1.6 million Palestinians in the Occupied Territories (not including Jerusalem). They estimate there are 120,000 Jews in the West Bank and 3,300 in Gaza. These figures exclude East Jerusalem. In the table, estimates for Israelis in the Occupied Territories are from the US State Department (1992). A study by Israel's Peace Now organization (1992) puts the West Bank figure at 115,000. Peace Now says 270,000 overseas Palestinians also have legal rights to return. These are not in the above totals.

The State Department says Israel controls 50% of West Bank land and 33% of Gaza. Peace Now says the figures are 60% and 35%. Both studies exclude East Jerusalem.

### **The Bak'aa Refugee Camp in Jordan**

**Notes from a Visit** Six camps were created after the 1967 war including Bak'aa. It is the biggest in the Middle East. About 80% are Refugees from 1948, the rest Displaced Persons from 1967. Many were forced out twice, from Israel in 1948 then from the West Bank in 1967. Bak'aa was built to hold 28,000 but has 100,000. It is Jordan's fourth largest city. People originally lived in tents but the Germans gave money to build shelters. Each family has 100 square meters. UNRWA provides 9 years of education in 16 schools. Jordan runs four secondary schools. There are 15,000 students in primary and 5,000 in secondary schools. There are two health centers: one for mothers and children, one for adults. There is a Physical Therapy center with colorful Disney characters on the walls. UNRWA covers 75% of the health bill. The camp has dirt roads and open sewers. There are many flies. A sewage system and electricity are under construction (I was told this in 1967). There is free lunch for kids under 6 and for older students in need. The size of the camp is 1.4 square kilometers. About 1000 families are on rations (average family size is 7.7). Those with jobs get no benefits. Many residents are from Nablus, Jerusalem, Jericho, Gaza. In the camp they have arranged themselves by village of origin. There are fourth generation refugees in the camp. If there were a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, Displaced

Persons could return under international law but not Refugees, who are from Israel proper. Most houses have 3 rooms--2 Bedrooms, kitchen, open courtyard. Five thousand of the inhabitants are Gulf War refugees.

Streets are narrow and unpaved, about ten feet across except for the main street which is filled with businesses. The residential streets have open drains in the middle. Drains are about 6 inches across and 3-4 inches deep, probably for dish water, etc. The camp is on the side of mountain so the streets are hilly. During the rains the roads turn to mud. The main street is filled with cars, people, carts. There is a cacophony of sounds. It would be exciting and fun if not so tragic. Shops I saw: onions, bicycles, welding, tapes, books, TV repair, flour, clocks, lottery, shoes, video. Most stores are probably no more than 10 feet x 20 feet, with doors that pull down and lock at night.

People have Jordanian citizenship and work inside and outside the camp. UN programs are run by Palestinians. Busses take people to cities to work. When people get wealthy, they often remain so there are a range of classes in the camp. They came as communities and want to remain as communities. We note several gold shops. There is no obvious security except locking the door at night. The family and religious structures are strong so there is no crime, robbery, drugs, alcohol, illegitimacy. As we walk past the police station, the officers are playing soccer.

Small kids follow us around, laughing and asking us to take their picture. No one asks for money (but every child wants a ball-point to practice writing). We visit some houses. Most have popular pictures of Mecca or Jerusalem. One friendly woman offers us tea. One family has 8 persons. The mother works for the Ministry of Health as a cleaner. In another case two shelters are joined together and hold four families with 25 people. There is no running water, electricity, or toilet. The door is metal, hangs crooked, and does not close tightly. This is not a problem in the summer, but last winter Amman had two feet of snow. This house would be totally unprotected. In one house a very old man with a naughty laugh says that since his wife died he has been alone. Would my student marry him? Everyone laughs. Another old man walks up to us in some distress, motions to the surrounding situation and repeats Haram, Haram, Haram, which means sin.

I note the absence of hostility and ask our UN escort. He says people want a settlement and are not hostile. But I notice some boys get chased away, and one escort says "you are not safe among these people" without elaborating. Later, a lady is very upset. A friend says "She thinks you are Jews and says she wants peace." At one point a resident is discussing the camps when someone walks up. He looks like someone from an old gangster movie--thin face, unsmiling, sunglasses, cheap suit. The resident begins to speak glowingly of the wonderful plans the government has for Bak'aa--education, roads, electricity. It is obvious this person is secret police--mukhabarat. A friend says, "you go to the camp on your tour, then I will take you." I suspect we are getting a sanitized version. I ask a resident if there was fighting here in 1970 during the Black September uprising and he says nervously "of course!" The government does not trust these people and probably has some under detention or surveillance.

The government has a department of Palestinian Affairs. There is an elected camp Council. We met Mr. Abdul-Hadi, Council head and a PNC member. He is a distinguished gentleman in traditional robe. Speaks no English. He tells us: 1) Palestinians do not dislike Americans but dislike their policies 2) There is a double standard. UN Resolutions on Iraq are implemented but not on Palestine. The US vetoes efforts to help Palestinians. No American would sacrifice his home to foreigners. 3) The Gulf War was costly for America and will cost more in the future. Does the US administration have the courage to do what Eisenhower did in 1956 and force Israel out of occupied land? The answer is in the hands of the American people, not the government. 4) He asks that we tell Americans what he said and how Palestinians live.

*Comment:* I have seen Palestinian camps in Jordan, West Bank, Gaza. I have walked Nairobi's Mathare Valley slum where children grow up in cardboard boxes: I have seen South Africa's Soweto, and have walked through Cairo's City of the Dead, where hundreds of thousands live in a graveyard. The Palestinian camps are not the most unhealthy or the poorest, but are the most depressing. As bad as Bak'aa is, the camps in the West Bank are worse, and the West Bank camps look like heaven compared to Gaza. The situation is a Thorn in the Eye of God.

Personal Observations by Ron Stockton, 1992. Visits in 1987 and 1992.

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## THE TRAGEDY OF LEBANON

One of the tragedies of modern times is what happened to Lebanon in the 1970s and 1980s. Lebanon was traditionally called the Switzerland of the Middle East for its political neutrality, its sophisticated pluralistic culture, and its fame as a banking and business center. But its own domestic political tensions, compounded by the dispute between the Israelis and Palestinians, combined to create an explosion that tore the country apart.

There is no time to review the background to those events, how the French in the 1930s created a government based on religio-ethnic groups, how the leaders of those groups agreed to divide key government positions up among themselves, and how their agreement to began to break down in the 1950s. What is relevant here is that the Lebanese Civil War began in 1976 when the killing of some Lebanese Christians near Beirut by persons unknown led to a retaliatory attack upon Palestinians. As the fighting escalated, Syria intervened to stabilize the situation (at the invitation of the Lebanese government and with an Arab League blessing, thus making their presence in Lebanon "legal"). The war flared for two years with many casualties and many refugees, both internal and external. The Syrians remained after the fighting diminished.

In 1978, Israel penetrated southern Lebanon up to the Litani River. Their stated goal was to reduce what they saw as a threat from Palestinian *fedayeen*. (The word means those willing to make sacrifices. Guerrilla might be another translation.) The area south of



the Litani is a culturally-mixed place with Christians as well as Shiites. Israel created a puppet army (The Southern Lebanese Army or SLA) under a Christian military officer named Major Haddad (succeeded by Major Lahd after Haddad's death from cancer). This so-called Israeli security zone is of undefined size but is roughly 5-15 miles deep and 35-50 miles wide. Israel and the SLA have been faced since then by furious Lebanese resistance led by the Shiite group Hezbollah, known in English as the Party of God. Hezbollah has received support from Iran.

In June, 1982 Israel again invaded Lebanon. There had been a US-brokered truce along the border but the government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon felt they saw an opportunity to crush the PLO, forge an alliance with Lebanon, and deal with the occupied territories under more favorable terms. The invasion occurred with the collaboration of a Lebanese government led by the Gemayel family and their Phalangist Party. According to Secretary of State Haig, Begin told the US his objective was limited: to drive the PLO back 40 kilometers, "so that all our civilians in the region of Galilee will be set free of the permanent threat to their lives." It was said that the operation would last 3-4 days. But Begin had not spoken truthfully. In seven days Israel reached Beirut and occupied most of the country except for Beirut itself, the pro-government north, and the Syrian-controlled Bekka Valley. Then came an eighty-day siege of Beirut, where Yasser Arafat and the PLO were entrenched. Rather than enter Beirut with heavy losses, Israel conducted massive air raids, destroying much of the city. Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* wrote of "indiscriminate" bombing, a word that angered Israel and its supporters. With television footage showing Beirut in flames, public opinion turned against Israel.

President Reagan criticized Israel on several occasions, first expressing "regret" at civilian deaths, then "outrage," then "revulsion." In his memoirs, he described it this way: "I decided to appeal personally to Begin to stop the fighting and abide by the (US-brokered) cease-fire ... I suggested to Begin that if he didn't, he could expect a drastic change in Israel's relationship with the United States ... Despite our appeals for restraint, the Israelis on August 12 opened a new and even more brutal attack on civilian neighborhoods in Beirut that sickened me and many others in the White House. This provoked me into an angry demand for an end to the bloodletting ... (in a call to Begin) I used the word 'Holocaust' deliberately and said the symbol of his country was becoming 'a picture of a seven month old baby with its arms blown off.'" (Reagan, pp. 425-26).

Under a US-brokered agreement, 800 marines entered Beirut on September 1 to evacuate 15,000 PLO soldiers. The US also guaranteed the safety of unarmed Palestinian refugees left behind. The marines withdrew after 17 days having successfully achieved the first part of its mission. The PLO moved its headquarters to Tunis.

The second entry of the marines into Lebanon was more tragedy than success. Bashir Gemayel, youngest son of aging Christian Phalange leader Pierre Gemayel, was elected President of Lebanon in an election occurring during the presence of the Israeli army. Gemayel was widely hated for various incidents conducted by his militia over the years. On September 14, just prior to taking office, he was killed in

a bomb explosion. What happened next is unclear. *Time* magazine reported that Phalange leaders and Ariel Sharon discussed the possibility of revenge. (*Time* lost a libel suit for being unable to prove its report). Whatever the details, Israeli troops entered Beirut and surrounded the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla. On September 18, with Israelis securing the perimeter, Phalangist units went into the camps and conducted a massacre that left perhaps 800 Palestinians dead (some estimates put the numbers at 2400). The Phalange and Israelis suffered no losses.

Three days later, US marines re-entered Lebanon, this time not fully neutral. By the fall of 1983, marines were firing on Lebanese units and the offshore battleship *New Jersey* later shelled Druze positions in the Shuf Mountains. On October 23 Western positions were attacked by bombers, killing 241 US marines and 58 French soldiers. Two weeks later, an attack on Israeli Lebanese Headquarters killed 29 Israelis and 30 prisoners. By December, 1983 Lebanon claimed 19,085 dead, Israel over 368.

If America was shocked by its marine deaths, what followed was even more traumatic. In March, 1985 a group linked to the US attempted to kill religious leader Sheikh Fadlalla by placing a bomb in his apartment building. The sheikh escaped but 80 neighbors died (see Woodward and Wright for details). Then in April, Israel took 1200 Lebanese into Israel, telling the Red Cross these were NOT prisoners of war. The dead in the bombing and the prisoners were all Shiites.

At this point, there were nine foreign armies in Lebanon: American, French, British, Italian, Israeli, Syrian, United Nations, as well as some returning Palestinian units and some Iranians. To the Lebanese it seemed as if their country had ceased to exist. To the Shiites of the south, their land had turned into hell. Soon violent resistance erupted. Shiite political groups began to kidnap western professors and religious leaders; planes were hijacked (Jordanian and Kuwaiti); assassinations occurred. Also, TWA 847 was hijacked by Shiite militants and kept on the tarmac at Beirut airport for over two traumatic, televised weeks. On the Israeli-Palestinian front, the Achille Lauro was hijacked (with one American killed); three Israelis in Cyprus suspected of being intelligence agents were assassinated; and Israel bombed the headquarters in Tunis, killing 80 people. (Arafat was jogging and escaped). Back in the US, Arab-American leader and peace advocate Alex Odeh was assassinated by individuals believed to be right-wing Jewish nationalists.

By February, 1984, the US marines were completely out of Lebanon and in June, 1985 Israeli forces withdrew to their "security zone" in the south. But it was not for several more years that all American hostages were released. And for a decade after the Israeli invasion, the killing continued. A study by the Lebanese government released March 1992 found that between 1975 and 1990 144,000 Lebanese had died in the wars and invasions of that time. This figure does not include Palestinians.

Sources: Alexander Haig, *Caveat*; Walid Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*; Jonathan Randal, *Going All the Way*; George Schultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*; Ronald Reagan, *An American Life*; Ariel Sharon, *Warrior*; Bob Woodward, *Veil*; Robin Wright, *Sacred Rage*.

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## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART III, LESSON FOUR: PALESTINIAN SITUATION AND PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM

#### Teaching Strategy

There are four goals for this lesson: First, students should understand the conditions of Palestinian existence; specifically their population diaspora and the circumstances of occupation; as in Lesson Two, they will see how objective conditions produce political outcomes. Second, they should understand the role and impact of the PLO on Palestinian political developments. Because of long-standing US government hostility to Palestinian nationalism, there is a predisposition to see the PLO in negative, almost demonic terms. A more detached perspective will help students. Third, they should see how Palestinian perspectives on their own situation (and on their relationship with Israel and Israeli Jews) has evolved over the years. There is a tendency to think of Palestinians as having a common, ahistorical, unchanging perspective. By seeing the positions of 1948, 1964, 1974, and 1988 in context, this simplistic viewpoint will be changed; finally, there is a subtle goal of helping students overcome the Rhetoric Wars that have portrayed Palestinians in exceptional negative light. By seeing conditions, evolution, complexity, and human faces, students can be freed from the poisons of dehumanization and stereotyping.

1. Review information on population figures and where Palestinians live. Refer to maps. Point out especially how many live in Historic Palestine, on the border of Historic Palestine, and in more distant lands. (Remember that there are perhaps 50,000-100,000 Palestinian-Americans, many being professionals). It will be important for students to see that those *in the homeland* would think and act differently from those in exile. When Palestinian leadership shifts from Exile Leaders to Internal Leaders as a result of the Intifada, this will be a critical distinction. If students did not do the Pie Chart project earlier, this might be a good point to do it or some similar exercise.
2. There are three PLO positions included in the Student Lesson: the PLO Charter, the Democratic Secular State proposal of 1974, and the Two State Solution (Declaration of Independence). Like Lesson Two, this is a rather complex, text-based lesson. Break the class into teams who are

- supporters of one of the three positions. Teams will discuss their position among themselves and try to figure out the following: what are the key points that they support? Is their position compatible with the other two documents? How is their position preferable to other plans? Should they agree to modify their position? What in their plan do they not want to abandon, even if they must break ranks with others? Reassemble class. Have speakers explain their positions to others. Have students serve as a "PNC Conference" to discuss whether to accept the Two-State Proposal based on presentations.
3. A major goal of the lesson is to humanize the conflict. Use the profiles of six Palestinian families to do this. Break the class into six groups, one for each family. Have families discuss which of the three main Palestinian positions they prefer and why. Reassemble the class and have designated speakers explain their perspectives. Have other students serve as a "PNC Conference," as above. (We will use the Palestinian families later; do this exercise if possible).
  4. If you are inclined towards poetry, use the poem by Mahmoud Darwish, the most famous Palestinian poet. Darwish captures the feeling of the Palestinians that have been turned into faceless beings, treated by the world simply as a "problem" of "refugees" to be ignored or solved. He also captures the determination of the Palestinians to assert their identity and existence. Ask students what they think the author is trying to say. Ask whether they think he is violent. (He is not. The perception that he is can generate a discussion about the difference between militancy and violence).

### Teacher Background

In 1948, there were approximately 860,000 Palestinians in the Mandate inside the "green line." About 700,000 were driven out or fled. Recent Israeli research suggests the number who became refugees may have been higher--perhaps 800,000. Palestinians call the events of 1948 *Al Nakbah*--The Catastrophe.

The impact of exile on the Palestinians was devastating. They had lost their homeland and to many people they lost even the right to call themselves a people. There was a conscious effort by Israelis and their supporters to suggest that they were not even Palestinians but were Syrians or Jordanians who had just recently moved to Palestine for jobs but had no real attachment to the land (or right to live there). Arab leaders in other countries viewed them with suspicion since their relatively large numbers (especially in Jordan and Lebanon) threatened to overwhelm the local population. And the world community--which was committed to principles of international law--seemed oddly unwilling to enforce its resolutions in this particular situation. Some Palestinians began to think there was a conspiracy led by Jews to keep the international community from doing what was right. Others felt Arab leaders were under the control of Western powers and were not representing their own people.

The few Palestinians who remained behind under Israeli rule also suffered. During the war Israelis destroyed 394 Palestinian towns and

villages and appropriated the land for Jewish use. After the war Palestinians suffered even more losses. The Israelis passed the "present absentee" law which held that anyone not physically on their property during the 1948 fighting would be considered suspect and hence would lose their land. Approximately 75,000 Palestinians lost their land through this law. Another 250 dunums were taken from the remaining Palestinians under this law (4 dunums = 1 acre), and additional villages were destroyed. Between 1949-53, 350 of 370 new Jewish settlements or towns were built on confiscated land. Those Palestinians remaining behind were kept under military rule until 1966, with restrictions on the right to move about, to work, to participate in politics. Those overseas at the time of the partition (visiting relatives or on vacation or business) were not allowed to return. Family separations were painful and a modest family reunification plan helped only a small proportion of the cases.

### Political Evolution

In the aftermath of 1948, Palestinians took two different paths. One group under the Grand Mufti Amin Hussein set up the "Gaza Government" that called for the reversal of the partition resolution and the creation of a Palestinian state in all of Palestine. He was prepared to grant full citizenship to Jews but not to create a Jewish government. ("Grand Mufti" was the religious title held by the chief Muslim leader in Jerusalem. Under the colonial system, the Mufti was a government official. Hussein was selected by the British and was close to them until the 1930's when he split with Britain over the 1936 Palestinian uprising, fled into exile, and met Hitler during World War II. Hussein led his large Jerusalem family into violent confrontations with other families. He was very controversial and unpopular in some circles. His "government" had no real support and quickly disappeared. Faisal Hussein--the prominent and popular Jerusalem Palestinian leader known to be close to Arafat--is his nephew.

A second group--those living in exile in Jordan--aligned with King Abdullah and agreed to unite with Jordan into one country (this unification effectively applied only to the West Bank and East Jerusalem). The heads of the great Palestinian families (Dajani, Nashashibi, Nusseibeh) met in Jericho in 1949 with Abdullah and agreed to this unification. Some scholars believe the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951 in Jerusalem was in retaliation for this and other alleged Jordanian attempts to undermine Palestinian independence. (Anecdote: It was this unification that changed Transjordan into Jordan, shifted the country from an Emirate to a Kingdom, and changed Abdallah's title from Emir to King.) To Palestinian nationalists the unification was not legitimate and was never accepted. However, most Palestinians gladly accepted Jordanian passports and Jordanian payments for their work in education and other public service activities. The vote of the Arab League in 1974 to declare the PLO the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" was partially an effort to delegitimize the Jordanian annexation, but primarily to ratchet up the pressure on the Israelis and the US for more energetic efforts to make a peace that would advance the cause of the Palestinians. In 1988 King Hussein of Jordan repudiated any Jordanian claim to the West Bank.

Upon unification, all Palestinians in Jordan received full Jordanian

citizenship. Palestinians today are very prominent in Jordanian business and government (especially the foreign service). King Hussein's third wife--who died in a tragic accident--was from a prominent Nablus family. Because the Palestinians are highly educated people, they have achieved prominence and success in many countries. And because many in the Gulf and elsewhere carry Jordanian passports, they often return their earnings to Jordan. These remittances have been a great boon to the Jordanian economy and have given Jordan a political significance well beyond what one would expect for a country with so few resources.

**Alert:** Ariel Sharon and other Israelis of the Revisionist tradition argue that because after World War I the League of Nations first used the term Palestine to include Jordan, and because a majority of Jordanian citizens are of Palestinian ancestry, this makes Jordan a Palestinian state. They suggest that Palestinians could move across the border, replace King Hussein, and have a Palestinian state. Palestinians do not accept this, nor do Jordanians, the American government, nor the world community. It is an argument with no standing outside certain circles who feel Israel should hold on to the territory occupied in 1967.

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## THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AND BEYOND

In the 1950s various Arab leaders created Palestinian groups (political and/or military) that were essentially front organizations for their host countries. Each Arab leader wanted to capture the Palestinian cause for his own purpose. Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo all did this. Few of these organizations ever developed mass followings. The most famous of these organizations was the Palestine Liberation Organization, created in 1964 by Nasser of Egypt. Since Nasser was the dominant Arab leader at the time, he persuaded the Arab League to endorse the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." He put a bombastic Syrian puppet --Ahmed Shuqayri--at its head. It was Shuqayri's boastful and irresponsible promise to drive the Israelis into the sea that is so often quoted.

In the early 1960s Palestinians began to form their own organizations. At the American University of Beirut, students with radical or leftist leanings emerged around George Habash, a Christian whose family had been forced from their home in Lydda in 1948. In Kuwait a group of engineers and other professionals--some educated at Egyptian universities--began to organize around Yasser Arafat. They started small--with newsletters and discussion documents affirming the right of Palestine to exist. By the mid-1960s guerrilla units based in Egypt began conducting operations from Sinai and Gaza. Others operated across the Jordanian border.

The 1967 war was a disaster for Arabs. Israel crushed all Arab armies in a week. It became obvious to Palestinians that if they were to have their own land, it would not be through the efforts of Arab leaders. They would have to do it themselves even though their position at the time was exceptionally weak.

In 1968 15,000 heavily-armed Israeli soldiers entered Jordan to destroy a Palestinian guerrilla center at Karamah, just below the city

of Salt at the top of the rift. After a day of fierce battle, the position--under the leadership of Arafat's Al Fatah--held. The Palestinians had taken big losses but had stood against the Israeli army. Over half of Al Fatah guerrillas were dead (150 of 300 compared with under 30 Israeli dead) but Arafat was a hero and the battle of Karamah a legend. With two days, 5,000 young men joined Fatah. From this point on, Arafat was the dominant leader of the Palestinian nationalist movement.

In 1969 Arafat became chairman of the PLO and restructured it into an umbrella organization with membership open to all Palestinian groups. The PLO has a Parliament (the Palestine National Council) and an Executive Committee made up of representatives of the recognized Palestinian groups. While at various times Palestinian radicals have refused to cooperate with the PLO (they accuse it of being too willing to accommodate to Israel among other things) still the PLO has been a unifying organization. Members of the PNC include guerrilla and political groups, women's associations, students, writers and intellectuals, mayors and others expelled from the West Bank and Gaza, unions, and overseas Palestinians. While the military representatives are chosen by their leaders, other representatives are elected by their membership.

Students should understand how Palestinian thinking has evolved over the decades. It is a mistake to see Palestinian perspectives as somehow fixed in time. Three major positions reflecting two major shifts should be addressed. The first position is the PLO Charter; the second the Democratic Secular State proposal; the third the Algiers Declaration of 1988. *If you feel you do not have time to cover all three major Palestinian positions, then you should cover the Algiers Declaration, which represents the current official Palestinian position.*

## THE PLO CHARTER

The Charter was adopted in Jerusalem in 1964 at the time the PLO was created. It reflects Nasserist thinking about Arab nationalism, the primacy of the Arab states, and the confrontation with Israel as a central task. The Charter sees Zionism as a manifestation of western colonialism that "conspired and worked to displace" the Palestinians; it affirms that the Palestinian people have a right "to regain its homeland" and to the "right of self-defense" as guaranteed under international law. The various articles in the charter outline Palestinian thinking at the time.

1. Article 2 defines the boundaries of Palestine in terms of the Mandate and rejects partition. Jordan is not considered part of Palestine.
2. Arab Nationalism is a much-misunderstood concept. Non-Arabs often assume it means that all Arabs should be unified into a single political system, and indeed there are some few who do believe so. But what Arab nationalists want more than unification is unity: the ability to act in concert, to play a positive role in history, to make their own judgments and decisions without being unduly influenced from outside. There is a belief that Arabs are a common people or nation with a common culture, a



common history, and a common historical destiny. They are now divided and weak and controlled by outside powers. While not becoming one state, Arabs should become once again one people.

3. Articles 6 and 7 invite "Jews of Palestinian origin" to be Palestinians. It does not include Jewish immigrants from Europe or elsewhere, not does it address the question of whether Jews overseas (America, Europe, etc.) can come in the future. Other versions of the Charter mention earlier dates. Arafat's "Gun and Olive Branch" Speech of 1974 offers citizenship to all Jews living in Palestine at the time, as does the Algiers Declaration of 1988.
4. Article 8: Education is the very center of Palestinian identity. Like Jews, Palestinians have always believed that education, consciousness, and study were the ways to maintain their identity and existence in diaspora. It is no accident that Palestinians are among the best educated of all Arab peoples. One of the major organizations of the PLO is the education department, which runs schools wherever there are Palestinians.
5. Article 18: It is a long-standing viewpoint in the Arab world that Jews are a religion but not a nationality. Many documents insist that they would guarantee full rights to Jews as individuals or as a faith, but not grant them separate political rights. It is of course political rights as a nationality that is the essence of Zionism. We might also note that many Israelis have a similar view of Palestinians: they can have rights as individuals but not the right to independent nationhood (self-determination).
6. Article 19: Israel is seen as the last European colony, an effort to place European settlers in the midst of Arab populations, to displace Arabs from their land, and to use colonial populations to dominate the region. Palestinians often cite Herzl as evidence of this conclusion.
7. Article 26: The foreign policy of the PLO has been to cooperate with all Arab governments, become entangled with none, break with none. Many Palestinians were critical in 1990 of the break with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia over the Gulf crisis. Arafat vigorously insisted he had not violated this tradition, had condemned the invasion of Kuwait, but he had equally condemned the introduction of Western armies into the Arab world and the war against Iraq. He felt his position was distorted by the western media to discredit the Palestinians.

The PLO Charter is sometimes called the PLO Covenant. This is a poor translation that should not be used since it connotes to some people a Biblical Sacredness that is not appropriate and can lead to misunderstandings. (One major Jewish organization recently published an article that said the "Covenant" was comparable in sacredness to the Torah in the Jewish tradition.) The word in Arabic is *Mithak*, a word used to describe the United Nations Charter or a non-aggression pact between two states. Charter is a more accurate and less inflammatory translation.

## PALESTINIANS AFTER 1967

After the 1967 the Palestinians moved into two directions: the mainstream under Arafat moved towards an accommodationist position involving implicit recognition of Israel and a willingness to negotiate; the radical wing went in a nonaccommodationist direction, forming the Rejectionist Front, aligning themselves with the radical Arab states, and conducting violent attacks upon other Palestinians. In 1974, at Khartoum they linked themselves to the three no's: no peace, no recognition, no negotiation. The Rejection Front was made up of the PFLP, PFLP-GC, Arab Liberation Front, and the Popular Struggle Front. Most were backed by Libya, Iraq, or Syria.

The first official break was in 1974 when Yasser Arafat spoke to the United Nations and outlined what was called the "Democratic Secular State" proposal. It called for a united Palestine with a secular government that treated all citizens equally and included all Israelis and Palestinians. Arafat called it a "dream." That same year the PLO adopted a Political Program that called for a Palestinian "national authority" on "any part of Palestinian soil that is liberated." (While militants sometimes said the creation of such an "authority" would be the first stage in the defeat of Israel, that was not the position of the mainstream. Prominent Palestinians such as Arafat often added that once such an "authority" was created, they would carry on the struggle for a united Palestine "by peaceful means." Arafat said this might produce regional economic and political integration according to the Benelux Model that links independent states Belgium, Holland, and Luxemburg into an "open borders" arrangement). That seemed to hint at a two-state solution (i.e., an acceptance of Israel and Palestine living side by side).

The Rejectionists moved away from the consensus at this point and assassinated several accommodationists in the next few years. In 1977 the US and USSR issued a joint statement calling for "termination of the state of war and establishment of normal peaceful relations" between Israel and Arabs and "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." It was endorsed by the Palestine National Council. Then in 1981 Soviet President Brezhnev's call for a Palestinian state and recognition of Israel was endorsed by PNC. The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon set back the peace process. The Intifada began in 1987 and in 1988 the PLO met in Algiers and officially accepted UN Resolution 181 which had authorized Jewish and Palestinian states in Palestine. The accommodationist had carried the day.

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## A DEMOCRATIC SECULAR STATE

In September 1970 Fatah issued its proposal, "Towards a Democratic State in Palestine for Muslims, Christians and Jews." This proposal insisted that Palestine be united and that the Zionist state be dismantled but broke new ground in that it affirmed the right of Israelis to remain in Palestine. It repudiated previous anti-Semitic accusations (such as treating *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* seriously), and insisted that, while imperialism/Zionism was responsible for the exile of the Palestinians in 1948, the Jewish people were not. It affirmed

that a united Palestine would be a champion of threatened Jews anywhere and would be "a home for all of us." This change, Fatah said, came because military victories in Karameh and elsewhere gave the Palestinians enough self-respect to back off from previous proposals.

"The Democratic, non-sectarian Palestine still lacks full clarity and elaboration, but this is the best that can be done at this stage of the arduous liberation struggle. The Palestinians have outgrown their bitterness and prejudice in a relatively short time through armed struggle. A few years ago, discussing this proposal would have been considered as a complete sell-out or high treason. Even today, some Arabs still find it very difficult to accept the proposed goal and secretly--or publicly--hope that it is nothing more than a tactical propaganda move. Well it is definitely not so. The Palestinian revolution is determined to fight for the creation of the new democratic and non-sectarian Palestine as the long-term ultimate goal of liberation. Annihilation of the Jews or of the Palestinian exiles and the creation of an exclusive racist or theocratic state in Palestine be it Jewish, Christian or Muslim is totally unacceptable, unworkable and cannot last. The oppressed Palestinian masses will fight and make all needed sacrifices to demolish the oppressor exclusive state."

Arafat's November 1974 speech to the UN--commonly called the "Gun and Olive Branch Speech"--summarized the Palestinian perspective on the conflict: that Zionism was linked to colonialism, that it was philosophically racist, that it was anti-Semitic since it challenged the right of Jews to live in diaspora and discriminated against Palestinian Jews, that Zionists had conducted terrorism against the Palestinian people in driving them from their land, and that Israeli law discriminates against Palestinians and hence is racist. (In 1975 the UN passed a resolution on Zionism and Racism, discussed below.)

Shifting from the past, Arafat said the struggle had created "a new Palestinian individual" who was looking to the future. "For many years now, our people has been exposed to the ravages of war, destruction and dispersion. It has paid in the blood of its sons that which cannot ever be compensated. It has borne the burdens of occupation, dispersion, eviction and terror more uninterruptedly than any other people. And yet all this has made our people neither vindictive nor vengeful. Nor has it caused us to resort to the racism of our enemies. Nor have we lost the true method by which friend and foe are distinguished."

Arafat cited the experiences of Palestinian freedom fighters, then turned to two non-Muslim models: one Jewish, one Christian. All are revolutionaries in the cause of justice in Palestine. Ahud Adif, a Jewish revolutionary, "now languishes in a Zionist prison among his co-believers." Bishop Capucci, a Catholic freedom fighter, is under arrest so that, as he says, "all men may live on this land of peace in peace." (Capucci was later convicted of shipping arms, with questionable evidence, and deported.)

The speech offered the Democratic Secular State Proposal as an

alternative to the Jewish state. The speech was received with hostility by the Israeli government, by Zionist organizations (who were very bitter at Secretary General Kurt Waldheim for his role in allowing Arafat to speak), and by the United States government. **Zionism and Racism:** In 1965, after debating the situation in South Africa the UN officially defined racism as "any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin." In 1975, it discussed Israeli occupation and concluded that the patterns were sufficiently similar to constitute a parallel. General Assembly Resolution 3379 determined that Zionism was "a form of racism." The Resolution passed with support from Soviet, Arab, and Islamic states over vigorous US opposition. Resolution 3379 was repealed in 1991 as a prelude to talks. Many Arab states voted against repeal. *Arguments Against 3379:* There were three of these. 1) The conclusion was offensive to those who saw Zionism as an affirmation of Jewish nationality and Jewish cultural revival. 2) Critics felt 3379 was an effort to delegitimize Israel in the eyes of the world community and under international law. 3) Israelis pointed out that Jews were of many races and backgrounds (including Ethiopians and others who are black). Hence, calling Zionism racist was logically inconsistent. *Arguments for 3379:* The arguments against 3379 are widely reported in the US since our government vigorously opposed the resolution. What is less well known are the arguments for 3379. Certain polemicists supported 3379 in an effort to score points on Israel. We can dismiss this as a part of the Rhetoric Wars, just as we can dismiss efforts to call everyone who supported the resolution anti-Semitic. The arguments for 3379 are: 1) Some observers see similarities between white domination in South Africa and Jewish domination in the Occupied Territories: ethnically restricted land ownership, detention without trial, limited procedural rights. Former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban calls Israeli policies "apartheid." According to a survey by the American Jewish Committee (1991) 41% of American Jews say the word "racist" applies to Israel. 2) There is also the Historical Argument. In the 1500s Europeans began to conquer non-European peoples. In some places they replaced local populations with their own (US, Australia). Elsewhere they took colonies (India, Nigeria). In a third pattern Europeans moved in as residents side-by-side with locals. In Algeria, South Africa, and Israel, settlers came to see themselves as natives with full rights to the land. Nelson Mandela meant this when he told Yasser Arafat in 1990 that both were fighting "a unique form of colonialism." (Note: both Mandela and Arafat affirm the right of immigrant populations to remain.) A historical model in which "racism" means Western domination of non-European peoples rather than skin color bigotry makes Jewish rule in Israel "racist." My advice: "racist" is a loaded word; analytic discussion might be easier using the term "discriminatory legislation." This topic is so inflammatory and so easily misunderstood that you would be wise to avoid it unless a student raises it.

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## TWO-STATE SOLUTION

Just as the 1967 and 1973 wars had sparked reassessment among the Palestinians, the Intifada of 1987 also sparked reassessment. For the first time the Palestinians in Palestine had taken the lead in the liberation movement. Hundreds of Palestinian protesters lay dead, a large proportion of them youths. Their "martyrdom" was a major

impulse for action. Earlier in the summer of 1988 the Unified Leadership of the Uprising had issued a public declaration calling upon Arab leaders to take some action that would advance the Palestinian cause. It was a powerful appeal, as if to say "with the blood of our children we have challenged the Israelis face-to-face. Now it is time for you to stop making speeches and do something realistic."

Present at Algiers were most Palestinian groups, even the militants who had boycotted the PLO for over a decade. The proposals before the PNC were revolutionary: accept UN Resolution 181 and the partition of Palestine, accept Israel as a permanent and legitimate entity, renounce terrorism (this was not new--the PLO had renounced terrorism before, but never with the militants present), declare the existence of a Palestinian state, and call for open negotiations with Israel. The debate went on for days. By 85% to 15% the resolutions passed. The Intifada had reduced the militants to their numbers. Their veto power was gone. They spoke, they objected, they voted, they lost, they accepted defeat with a commitment not to resist with violence (as they had done with previous peace initiatives). They left mumbling that the Israelis did not want a settlement, and that the Americans could not be trusted, but they left without violence. Soon the US opened dialogue with the PLO (a dialogue broken off because of an incident when Palestinian guerrillas landed on a beach near Tel Aviv). Although Arafat greeted the landing (in which no Israelis were hurt) by a renunciation of terrorism, he declined to remove Abul Abbas (whose group had organized the landing) from the PLO Executive Committee until the next meeting of the PNC. This was not sufficient for the US.

In 1988 the Palestine National Council adopted two documents, A Declaration of Independence and a Political Program (a negotiating position and a statement of tactics on what to do next). The Declaration was intended to be a document For The Ages. It was written by the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish.

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## **COMMENTS ON THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

1. The Declaration begins with a statement of pride that the three great monotheistic religions began in Palestine and affirms that the Palestinian Arab people also began in that land. It notes the religious heritage of the land, mentioning Judaism and Christianity before mentioning Islam.
2. In 1947 the UN approved Resolution 181 partitioning Palestine. Resolution 181 led to a Jewish state and the exile of the Palestinian people, but today it can be the basis of a settlement. This is a significant passage. It roots the very legitimacy of the Palestinian state in 181, which also was the basis of the Jewish state. Accepting 181 accepts the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Palestinian. It acknowledges the legitimacy of both (i.e., recognizes the right of Israel to exist). It suggests that 181 be the basis of a settlement.
3. The Declaration praises Palestinian steadfastness in the face of

suffering, exile, terrorism, expulsion, dispossession. The people held fast to their identity, embodied in the PLO. Then the Intifada created a new reality; the existence of the Palestinian people can no longer be denied.

4. The Intifada has seen the mass participation of all groups: women, youths, Christians, Muslims. It has not been an uprising of the leaders. The Declaration affirms equal treatment for all and promises a democratic system. A big question is what will happen to the millions of refugees if a Palestinian state came into existence. Would they all return? The practical problems would be enormous. This hints that many would remain elsewhere, but Palestine would be their national home regardless of where they live. Such a resolution would not be unlike that of Jews, for whom Israel is a homeland wherever they live.
5. The Declaration ends with a Sura (chapter) from the Koran. Arab culture--be it Islamic or Christian--is very religious. The Declaration begins with the Islamic invocation "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful."

## THE POLITICAL PROGRAM

At Algiers, the PNC also adopted a Political Program, a negotiating position and a statement of what to do next. In some ways the Program is more important than the Declaration because it discusses practical issues and strategy. However, since this unit tries to focus upon long-term thinking by Jews and Palestinians rather than upon negotiating positions, its inclusion in the Student Section might require inclusion of current (and rapidly shifting) Israeli positions as well to provide balance. Since that would change the nature of the unit, it was not done. Still, since the Political Program was adopted along with the Declaration, it seems appropriate to include it in your section for informational purposes. For a discussion of the Palestinian negotiating position see Abu Iyad, "Lowering the Sword," in *Foreign Policy*, 1990. Abu Iyad was the Number Two man in the PLO before his assassination in 1991, most likely by agents of Iraq because of his open criticism of the invasion of Kuwait.

### The Political Program

The "Political Program" adopted at the same time as the Declaration is a set of proposals for what to do next. It outlines the PLO negotiating position.

The document praises those Jews who have been "calling for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories in order to allow the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination."

The Program affirms the position of the PLO which "foresees the end of the occupation and asserts the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to return to their homeland and to their right to create an independent state."

The Program affirms "the necessity of holding an international conference for peace in the Middle East and of enabling the Palestinian people to obtain its national rights, with its right to self-determination and national independence on its territory in the forefront."

The Program asks that the UN "place the occupied Palestinian territory under international supervision" until there can be a "settlement of regional disputes by peaceful means." It affirms "the determination of the Palestine Liberation Organization to reach a comprehensive, peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its essence, the Palestinian cause, within the framework of the United Nations Charter" (and various resolutions) "in a manner that assures the right of the Palestinian Arab people to return, exercise self-determination, and establish its independent national state on its national territory, and creates arrangements of security and peace for all the states of the region."

How will these goals be achieved?

1. There should be an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations "with the participation of the permanent member states of the United Nations Security Council and all the parties to the struggle," the negotiations to be upon the basis of resolutions "242 and 338 and the assurance of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people....and the inadmissibility of seizing the lands of others by force or military invasion..."
2. There should be "Israeli withdrawal from all the Palestinian and Arab territories that it has occupied since 1967, including Arab Jerusalem."
3. The Jewish settlements must be removed; Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem must be reversed.
4. The refugee problems must be resolved according to UN resolutions, 194 being the major one.

The Program affirms "the privileged relationship between the two fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples, and that the future relationship between the two states of Jordan and Palestine will be established on confederal bases and on the basis of the free and voluntary choice of the two fraternal peoples, consolidating the historical ties and common vital interests between them."

"The Palestine National Council renews its commitment to the United Nations resolutions that affirm the right of peoples to resist foreign occupation, colonialism, and racial discrimination and their right to struggle for their independence. It again declares its rejection of terror in all its forms, including state terror, confirming its commitment to its previous resolutions in this regard..." (several are then named).

The Program "expresses its appreciation for the role and courage of the Israeli peace forces..." and calls upon the American people to urge their government to support efforts at regional peace for "all its peoples, including the Palestinian people."

## COMMENTS ON THE POLITICAL PROGRAM

1. The Political Program is more polemical than the Declaration of Independence. There is a logic in this. When leaders are preparing to change policy, they typically wrap innovations in a cloud of tradition and reaffirmation to reassure those with doubts. The key to the document is not the militant rhetoric but the policy suggestions that are in it.
2. The Palestinians always feared the Israeli-American strategy of organizing one-on-one negotiations between Israel and Arab states. This would omit the Palestinians. The Camp David Accords were a prime example. Palestinians also feared a US brokered conference since they assumed the US would support Israel. They were also aware of the Israeli refusal to meet with them, a refusal they felt was rooted in denial of the right of the Palestinians to exist as a national people. When Resolution 242 referred to "refugees" and not to their "legitimate rights" the PLO rejected it as inadequate. This Algiers Program specifies that the big powers would be at the talks, that it would be under UN auspices, that "all parties" would be present, and that Resolutions 242 and 338 would be the basis of negotiations along with "assurance of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people."
3. It was psychologically and politically impossible for Palestinians to acknowledge that they are agreeing to the permanent partition of Palestine, just as it would be for Jews to acknowledge that they must give up East Jerusalem to have peace. Statements have to be made indirectly to be palatable. This program means that the Palestinian state would be in the Occupied Territories and that traditionally Arab cities like Jaffa and Haifa would be yielded up to Israel. Needless to say, there are some Palestinians who consider this a betrayal.
4. The program speaks of a "confederal" relationship between Jordan and Palestine. This is another sensitive point. Palestine would be small with few resources and enormous social problems. Its viability would be facilitated if it were linked to a nearby state. The only options are Israel and Jordan. Militants do not want to affiliate with Jordan because of long-standing tensions between the two. They also fear that Jordan is a Western agent and that confederation implies a Western alliance for Palestine. The Program bites the bullet and affirms the "Jordanstine" idea.
5. The specific rejection of "terror in all its forms" was required of the PLO before the US would open up dialogue. The position of the PLO is that it had done that many times, but would do so once again.
6. The Program expresses concern at the rise of violence-prone elements in Israel and "expresses its appreciation for the role and courage of the Israeli peace forces in their resistance to and unmasking of their forces of fascism, racism and aggression, in their support for the struggle of our people and its heroic



uprising, and their support for the right of our people to self-determination and the establishment of its independent state."

7. The document says the refugee problem must be resolved according to UN resolutions, specifically Resolution 194 of 1948. This resolution resolved "that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible." The US supported 194 and as late as 1992 affirmed that it still supported 194. While Israel was required to register its support of Resolution 194 prior to its admission to the UN, recent Israeli governments have been quite hostile to it.

## PALESTINIAN OPPOSITION TO THE PLO MAINSTREAM

What we have described above is the evolving Palestinian mainstream under PLO leadership. As in all political systems, there are opposition groups. Two of these are most significant, those on the socialist left and those on the Islamic right. The leftists often function within the PLO and the Islamists often function outside the PLO (although they sometimes cooperate). Those trying to discredit negotiations or Palestinians in general often take quotations from opposition leaders and suggest that this is the "true" Palestinian position. Make sure your students know the difference. **The Left Opposition.** The PLO mainstream under Arafat has a cluster of opposition groups on the left. The most important is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). This organization was founded in the mid 1960s by George Habash and a other students, mostly from the American University of Beirut. Habash is a Christian from Lydda (now called Lod). His family were among those expelled in 1948 by Israeli forces. Today his family house is an Israeli police station. Habash was trained as a medical doctor and is nicknamed Hakim, which means doctor. He has a charismatic personality and is a brilliant intellectual. For a time he ran a clinic in Jordan but soon entered politics. For a time in the 1960s and early 1970s the PFLP was one of the most radical of the Palestinian parties. It was Habash whose followers pressed for the Black September uprising of 1970.

Two key PFLP Lieutenants split off to form break-away groups: Naif Hawatmeh is another Christian who was an officer in the Jordanian army, He formed the DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, also called Popular Democratic Front). Hawatmeh has been the Loyal Opposition to Arafat over the years, often dissenting but reluctant to break entirely. He is often credited with first promoting the idea of "cantons" within Palestine that would allow Jews and Palestinians to live together in a federated state that would not necessarily involve elimination of a Jewish state. He is also credited in the early 1970s with the idea of creating a Palestinian "national authority" on "any land liberated," a phrase that implied less than the whole of Palestine and was seen as a staged accommodation with Israel.

A second dissenting Habash lieutenant, Ahmed Jibril, formed the militant PFLP-General Command, a group closely aligned with Syria. Jibril is hostile to the Algiers Declaration and has conducted frequent attacks on Israeli military positions. He has been accused of various bombings.

The PFLP was inspired by Leninist thinking. As they saw it, the powerful western industrial states created alliances with local regimes around the world. Those regimes (which would include both Arab states and Israel) may disagree among themselves and even go to war from time to time but fundamentally they share a convergence of interests. All want to maintain powerful military, bureaucratic regimes with governments that give the illusion of democracy but are not truly democratic. Some may use militant revolutionary rhetoric but this is merely to mobilize popular support. In fact, all would be threatened by a true revolution. The western powers, the Arab regimes, and the Zionist state in Palestine thus share common interests in their fear of true popular democracy.

Habash felt there should be organized revolution against Arab regimes to create a true revolutionary government somewhere in the Arab world, most likely in Jordan. The revolution could then spread out from that point. The Palestinians are the Arab people who feel most intensely the oppression of the international system and hence are the logical leaders of this revolution. Peace talks are merely an effort to work out an agreement among ruling elites to maintain their elite status. Arabs who join such talks are themselves part of the international bourgeoisie and would probably settle for a Palestine that was just another authoritarian state. A Palestine that came about through an international agreement would be oppressive, undemocratic, and symbolically independent but not much different from the other regimes in the region. It might even be linked to Israel in trade and diplomacy, since the elites of the two states would share common interests in maintaining their power. To Habash, Jews and Arabs are equally oppressed by their militarist authoritarian governments. The oppression will not end until both Zionist and Arab regimes are replaced with popular regimes.

**The Islamic Opposition:** There are three significant strains of Islamic militancy. (It is best to avoid the word Fundamentalist, which is nearly indefinable. Religiously, all Muslims are fundamentalists if by that we mean they adhere to certain fundamental doctrines such as the existence of only one God, the Koran as God's word, and Mohammed as God's prophet.) The first strains emerged in the 1930s in Egypt. An organization called the Muslim Brotherhood was committed to Egyptian independence from Britain. The Brotherhood worked closely with Egyptian officers to lead the revolution of 1952 against King Farouk. Many Palestinian leaders who studied in Egypt (such as Yasser Arafat) have friendly ties with the Brotherhood, which is found in Jordan and other countries. In 1948 the Brotherhood won respect by sending units to Jordan to fight for Palestinian independence. Today in many places the Brotherhood has committed itself to conventional politics. For example it is represented in the Egyptian and Jordanian parliaments. In other places it is more militant.

A second strain of Islamic politics also comes from Egypt, and it is more aggressive than the Muslim Brotherhood. These are the groups

that produced the assassins of President Anwar Sadat. They are committed to Islamic political revolution in Egypt, Palestine, and elsewhere. They feel that the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel shows exactly how corrupt the Egyptian regime is and how far it has gotten from the true teachings of the Islamic faith. They see the Egyptian government as serving American and Israeli interests. They are opposed to peace talks, which they feel are efforts by corrupt regimes (Arab, Jewish, Western) to work out an agreement that does not represent the interests of the common people. An Egyptian slogan about President Mubarak's role in the talks that began in Madrid in 1991 illustrates their perspective: "Mubarak sold Palestine at the auction in Madrid."

A third Islamic tendency was inspired by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. The groups linked to this tendency are most commonly associated with the Shiite population of southern Lebanon. There are also some Palestinians who admire Khomeini, and are linked organizationally to Iran. Islamic Jihad ("Crusade" or "Struggle") is one.

The most prominent Palestinian Islamic group is HAMAS, which is an acronym for Islamic Resistance Movement. It has its base in Gaza but is also found in the West Bank. While several of its leaders are clergy, most are not and many are educated professionals. Like other Palestinian parties, it has militant youths associated with it. HAMAS was founded in the early 1970s as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood and quickly came to enjoy unwelcome Israeli support. Because the PLO is a secular organization some pious Muslims have always had doubts about it. The Israelis found it easy to give Islamic leaders permits and privileges they denied to those linked with the PLO and other secular nationalist parties. This generated tensions with PLO militants, who claim that HAMAS is an Israeli creation. By the 1990's there were frequent clashes between supporters of the two groups. (Note the parallel with what Britain did in India during World War II. They locked up the leaders of the secular Congress party but allowed leaders of the Muslim League to be free. When the war ended, Muslim leaders were prepared to push for Pakistani independence and Congress leaders were out of touch.)

Today HAMAS is particularly strong in Gaza. They share certain common views with Muslims around the world: that Islam means submission to the will of God and that God's will is outlined in the Koran and was directly revealed by God to Mohammed. They feel that those who stand up for God's Truth are often subjected to danger and are often martyred. Those who die for the sake of God's Truth will be blessed and will be welcomed into the Arms of God. Politically, they feel Palestine is a part of the Islamic world and should not have a sectarian Jewish government. Like other Muslim leaders, they feel Judaism is a sacred revealed religion and is not a national movement. To treat Judaism as a nationality or as a national faith is a heresy. Under Islamic law, Jews are a "People of the Book" who are protected and would be given special legal status under an Islamic state, but they should not be exclusive leaders. They feel there is a systematic effort to discredit, misrepresent, and humiliate Islam and make it appear irrational. They oppose the Madrid peace talks. Their goal is a united Palestine under God's Law, as outlined in the Koran. While the PLO has moved towards negotiations, HAMAS has moved towards militant resistance.

The advocates of an Islamic resurgence are very diverse in their organizational, political, and tactical characteristics but they have three perspectives in common:

First, they believe the Arab and Islamic peoples have been divided and factionalized and kept under Western control for several centuries. They have not been able to play an independent role in recent world history or to make a positive contribution to contemporary world civilization. They would like to see the Arab people free from outside control and able to assert their own identity and make their own contribution to world civilization.

Second, they feel that the current Arab governments do not represent their own people. They see Arab regimes as authoritarian, undemocratic, and corrupt. Some are feudal regimes that should have passed into history decades ago. They are kept in power by western aid and arms. When their people rise up against them, western powers intervene to keep these regimes in power. (The most recent example would be the decision to nullify the results of Algeria's 1990 election, the first since independence in 1962. Military and political leaders arrested and detained leaders of the Islamic parties chosen by most voters in Algeria's first free election in decades.) Many Islamic leaders would like to remove or change these regimes. The militant, violence-prone groups in Egypt perhaps represent an extreme example.

Finally, they fear the corruption of the West. They watch American television shows such as Dallas, Cheers, and Miami Vice and conclude that American culture is post-religious, pagan, sexist, promiscuous, violent, drug and alcohol ridden, abusive of women and corrupt. They read that 25% of American children are born outside of marriage and they see pictures in American magazines of women dressed in sexually provocative ways. They believe the collapse of Western values and the family have produced western decline. They fear that such collapse will spread to their own civilization. (It is little known that many prominent Islamic revivalists have studied in the West, particularly the United States, and know our society well. They are not backward people who lack experience or cosmopolitan perspective).

Anthropologists say that when a culture is under attack, it sometimes tries to shelter women, hoping that if women--the transmitters of values--are protected then society and its values will survive. Arab culture is very protective of the rights of women. Muslims pride themselves in the fact that Koranic teachings on women provided them with economic and social rights that were not granted in the west for a thousand years. In most Arab countries women are fully represented in universities and the economy. (Saudi Arabia has its own customs and traditions which are not typical of the Arab world). Generally speaking, there is a traditionalism and modesty in Islamic and Arab culture (even among Arab Christians) that is different from northwest Europe, although patterns are similar to other Mediterranean countries, such as Spain, Italy, and Greece. Some Americans view these customs and values with hostility, seeing them as oppressive and unjust.

Public opinion polls show that Americans who are hostile to Arab and Islamic culture often cite the treatment of women. It might help your students if you would distinguish between cultural and political attitudes towards women. Arab culture is indeed more traditional and conservative than western culture. Women are expected to behave modestly and to refrain from sex until marriage. This produces an illegitimacy rate that is negligible. Also, since Islamic law is patrilineal, when divorces occur (as they do much less frequently than in our own culture), the judge is predisposed (but not required) to assign children to the family of the father rather than the family of the mother.

The other aspect of women's status has to do with the political dimension discussed above--the effort to shield women and maintain them in an imposed protected status. This means maintaining certain restrictions not universally found in Arab culture, such as having women stay out of the public eye or cover their faces. These developments--where they exist--are best understood politically rather than culturally. Also note that according to public opinion, women and men often share common perspectives on many of these issues.

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## **ISLAMIC VIEWS OF JEWS AND CHRISTIANS**

The Islamic religious tradition is based on the assumption that there was an ultimate or complete truth which God knew and which was revealed to humans in successive stages by prophets. The Koran mentions by name 25 Jewish-Christian prophets including Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, and Jesus. These are also considered Islamic prophets. (The word Islam means to submit to God's Will. A Muslim is one who submits. When the Bible says Abraham submitted to God it has special meaning to a Muslim).

Mohammed is the last prophet and the greatest, the Seal of the Prophets, the one chosen to deliver the final revelation. In Islam, Christians and Jews are honored because they are People of the Book who worship the one true God and whose revelations advanced God's purpose. The Koran specifically recognizes the integrity of Jewish and Christian prophets and includes them among the prophets of Islam. If you visit a mosque, you may see stories of these prophets in children's classrooms.

Contrary to common American belief, Islam specifically prohibits forced conversions. ("There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error." Koran 2:256.) While early Arab rulers brought neighboring regions under their political control, they never forced their subjects to convert. Under traditional Islamic law, Christians and Jews were allowed to govern their internal affairs--marriage, divorce, inheritance--through the legal concept of a millet. The Sultan would appoint a prominent religious leader as official head of the religious community. These groups had their own judicial and governing bodies.

Islam does have theological disagreements with the other faiths. Muslims feel Christianity deviated from true monotheism by the doctrine of the Trinity. In a passage praising Jesus ("Isa" in Arabic) the Koran insists "There is no God but God." Judaism, they believe,

deviated into sectarian politics. Since the Jewish prophets revealed universal truths, those Jews who think their religion gave them a separate national status are seen as incorrect. Palestinian documents often make this point, affirming their admiration of Judaism and promising protection of Jews but condemning Zionism.

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## YASSER ARAFAT PROFILE

Yasser Arafat is the dominant leader of the Palestinian nationalist movement and has been so since the 1960s. You should know something about his life. He was born in 1929, most likely in Cairo. He was of a Jerusalem family and some biographies hint that he was born in Jerusalem. He was probably in Palestine in 1948 and was refugeeed in that year. He was educated in Engineering at the University of Cairo where he made connections with the Muslim Brotherhood. He went to Kuwait in 1958 as an employee of the government and soon formed a successful engineering company.

In 1959 he began publishing *Our Palestine* with his friend Abu Jihad. Together they formed the political group called Fatah. On January 1, 1965 Fatah *fedayeen* (guerrillas or literally, those who sacrifice themselves) launched their first raids into Israel. Arafat himself led some of these raids and lived on the occupied West Bank during 1968. Arab governments (specifically Egypt and Syria) reacted with hostility to Fatah. Arafat was imprisoned in Syria for a time and has had bad relations with Syrian governments over the decades. But after the 1967 defeat of the Arab armies, the idea of a popular liberation war gained currency. The turning point was the Battle of Karameh in 1968, when Israeli units attacked a Palestinian position in the Jordan valley just below Salt, and the Palestinians held. Within days of the battle Fatah was inundated with 5,000 enthusiastic volunteers. Arafat and Fatah became the center of Palestinian nationalism and Arafat soon became head of the PLO, previously dominated by Egypt's Nasser.

After 1973 Arafat moved away from a strategy of "Revolution Until Victory" towards the more conservative doctrine of "stages," implying that while Palestinians would look to the ultimate liberation and reunification of Palestine, stage one might be the recognition of Israel. In 1974 the Arab League recognized the PLO as the "sole legitimate spokesman of the Palestinian people" and a few weeks later Arafat spoke before the UN in its first full discussion of the Palestinian situation since 1952. Arafat's increasing willingness to acknowledge the reality of Israel led the opposition to form the Rejectionist Front.

Meanwhile in Lebanon, the civil war that began in 1975 escalated, with Syria turning against the Palestinians. By 1982 the Israeli invasion of Lebanon created a disaster for Palestinians. Israel tried to assassinate Arafat and once blew up an apartment where he was staying, killing 200. He was evacuated in 1982 by the Americans and again in 1984, when uprisings in his own ranks and Syrian opposition nearly cost him the leadership of the PLO. In 1985, Israel bombed his headquarters in Tunis, killing 73 persons and narrowly missing Arafat who had just left. In November, 1987 the meeting of the Arab League virtually ignored Palestine (focusing instead on the Iran-Iraq War). Observers began to speak of the end of his career.

The Intifada resurrected Arafat's credibility. The 1988 Algiers meeting of the PNC approved Arafat's accommodationist position and in November he was again before the UN, speaking of peace between Israel and a future Palestinian state. His effort to mediate with Iraq in 1990 after its invasion of Kuwait discredited him in the eyes of those who saw him as supportive of Saddam, but the opening of talks in Madrid after the war once again thrust the PLO into the center of international diplomacy.

Public opinion polls show that over 80% of Palestinians view Arafat as their leader. He is a hero to many Palestinians, even those who disagree with him. He is admired for his personal integrity, his indifference to personal wealth, his devotion to the Palestinian cause, his miraculous survival capacity.

Arafat's historic contribution is that he kept the Palestinian nationalist movement alive and together in one organization (even though dissident elements split away at various times). His weakness is exactly the same: he bent over backwards to keep the movement together, making compromises that appear weak, vacillating, inconsistent. His effort to maintain good ties with all Arab states makes him seem devoid of ideology. He also sticks by friends too long, often winking at their corruption.

The case of Abul Abbas is typical. After the Algiers meeting of 1988 Arafat allowed him to remain on the PLO Executive Committee even though he was clearly not willing to submit to PLO discipline on military issues. In 1989, Abul Abbas's inept, unauthorized attempt to attack Tel Aviv from the sea made it appear that his target was a tourist beach. Opponents of US talks with the PLO were able to use the incident to precipitate a diplomatic break and a termination of talks. (Abul Abbas was dropped from the Executive Committee at the next meeting of the PNC).

**US reaction:** While the US has often dealt with the PLO under the table, there has been a long-time suspicion of Arafat. In 1992, when Arafat's plane crashed in the Algerian desert and supporters feared for his life, the US refused to use its satellites to locate the plane. It was not until Arafat and Rabin met in September, 1993 that US ties with PLO and Arafat began to normalize.

**A Poem:** The most famous Palestinian poet is Mahmoud Darwish, who wrote the Palestinian Declaration of Independence. One of his most famous poems is called *Investigation*, written in 1964. It is in the Student Edition, page 63.

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## TEACHING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

### PART III, LESSON FIVE: POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

#### Teaching Strategy

This Lesson could well be the most creative of all. It requires students to think in analytical terms. They should realize two things: First, objective conditions (such as population ratios) set parameters within which politics operate, and drive societies towards certain outcomes. Second, they should realize that no outcome is deterministic. Nothing *has* to happen.

1. Review the facts: population figures and ratios, the regions of geographic Palestine including the Occupied Territories, and where Palestinians live.
2. Tell students that this is where they put on their thinking caps. Emphasize that they are being asked to do a difficult task, to analyze the facts without letting their own personal feelings get in the way. In other words they are not to discuss what they want, but are to understand the points of view of the various parties in the dispute.
3. There are three ways to approach this material. All are worth doing. You have to decide which is best. The first is to discuss why the alternatives might or might not occur. The second is to focus upon how specific families might react to the alternatives. The third is to address the ethical dimension. Below are alternate ways to address these issues.
  1. Break student into five groups. Ask them to generate a list of reasons why this outcome might occur or might not occur. (Below are a list of reasons which you can use to help them with the points they may miss).
  2. Break into five groups. Within a group break into A, B, and C sub-groups. A's will argue for the option, B's against it, C's will judge who makes the best case. Teams take 15 minutes to decide on what basis they will make their decision and what information they will need to look at. Discussions may take place simultaneously in different parts of the room, or sequentially in front of the class.



3. Ask students to draw a teeter-totter with the arguments for and against each outcome on opposite sides. Which option has the most weight on the "for" side?
4. Ask students to think once again of the six Israeli and six Palestinian families encountered earlier. Break students into twelve groups, one for each family. Ask them to discuss how their family would react to each outcome. Which would the family want? After the discussion, have each team choose someone to represent the family. Then do one or more of the following: 1. In turn, have the six Israeli and the six Palestinian families discuss their perspectives among themselves with rest of the class watching. 2. Have "visiting delegations" of Israelis and Palestinians come to class, with the rest of the class interviewing them about their views and what they would like to see as the outcome. 3. Have a panel of Israeli and Palestinian families debate the issues among themselves, with the rest of the class watching. In all of these debates, emphasize to students that while some of the twelve families may show exceptional anger or even pursue extremist policies, all are real people who are acting as we might act if we were in their shoes. Try to humanize the deliberation process; push students away from caricature.
5. Following Student Question Seven (p. 81), ask students what they think American policy should be. Should we encourage any of these options, or resist any? Should we simply withdraw from the region, break all ties with all states, and allow history to take its course (whatever that is)? At present, we have a certain amount of leverage with Israel because of our foreign assistance (more than \$3.5 billion a year plus a \$10 billion subsidized loan guaranteed in 1992). Should we use this leverage? How? Which option would we favor if our foreign policy were rooted exclusively in a calculated effort to maintain and enhance American power in the region? Which would we favor if our foreign policy were rooted in a desire to promote justice? What do we mean by justice? What if power and justice are both included in our policy? Break students into sub-groups and ask them to come up with recommendations to the President.

Remember two things about these options:

1. They are conceptually defined. There may be more than five if we count permutations. For example, some Israelis have suggested giving Gaza independence and annexing the West Bank. Since these permutations do not avoid the basic problems, they are not treated as separate categories.
  2. Emphasize that all outcomes are improbable. None of these is likely (and yet *some* outcome *must* occur).
4. Student Question Eight (p. 82) might be a good final essay assignment.

## THE COSTS OF EACH OUTCOME

These are some significant reasons why each of the outcomes listed is improbable or too costly. If students have trouble thinking of costs, you can help them with these.

**Status quo:** 1. Since Palestinians will not accept the status quo, this outcome means ongoing conflict, rising tension, constant Israeli mobilization, large military expenditures, and extended reserve duty for Israelis. 2. Since societies do not handle stress well we can anticipate increasing clashes between Jews in Israel, the rise of extremist Jewish parties, and the rise of extremist Palestinian groups. 3. There would be declining support for Israel in the US and other countries and constant condemnation of Israel in the UN. This would put strain on the US-Israeli relationship since the US would have to defend Israel from criticism. 4. The US would have to provide increasing financial assistance to Israel. 5. There is the danger of anti-Semitism if Jews are somehow blamed for tensions and wars the Middle East.

**Unification:** 1. It would mean full voting rights for all Palestinians, those being 36% of the population. 2. Unification would mean the elimination of the Zionist dream of a Jewish state. Most likely the major opposition party in the new Israeli-Palestinian parliament would be the PLO, something most Israelis would never accept. 3. Most Palestinians would see this as a trick, would fear that the Israelis would not deal in good faith, and would resist. 4. The history of the conflict and the bad feelings that exist would make unification and cooperation an unrealistic option. 5. There would be great practical difficulties. For example what would be the name of the new state? What would be its language?

**Two-State Solution:** 1. There are over 200,000 Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories. Since all eligible settlers are in military reserve units, this means they could resist by force any arrangement they did not like. In the past, settler leaders have stated their intention to fight any effort to force them to live under Palestinian authority or to leave their settlements. 2. There are militant Palestinians who insist on a unified Palestine with majority rule. 3. The economies of the two regions have become so connected that separating them into two countries would create enormous problems. Both Israel and the Occupied Territories are small lands with imbalanced economies that are dependent upon each other. For example, Israel gets much of its water from aquifers and rainfall on the West Bank. Without Palestinian water, Israeli irrigation would have to be cut back (and certainly the Palestinian farmers would want to irrigate their own land with their own water, if they controlled it). Without some kind of ongoing linkage or outside financing, neither state would be economically viable. 4. Israel would fear that Palestine would become an enemy state. They would insist that the Palestinian state be demilitarized, thus leaving it vulnerable to attack by vigilante Jewish settlers and Arab neighbors. Would the Palestinian state accept these conditions?

**Expulsion of the Palestinians:** 1. Expulsion would send shock

waves throughout the region and the international system. It would be such an affront to Arabs and Muslims that any government that remained neutral would face overthrow--either from mass demonstrations or from a coup. There would be a general mobilization of Arab states against Israel. 2. Expulsion would require that Israel crush Jordan in advance (since Jordan clearly would resist having a million Palestinians dumped into its country of 3.4 million). Knocking out Jordan would require also knocking out Syria and Iraq, since both share borders with Jordan and would come to Jordan's assistance. And if Syria and Iraq were defeated, Egypt and Saudi Arabia would be left alone to face the newly empowered Israeli army. Since all governments in the region would recognize these dangers, it is unlikely that any would remain passive. 3. The practical problems of expulsion are considerable. Palestinians are aware the many of them fled the fighting in 1948 thinking they would be able to come back later, only to discover they were forbidden to do so. They would resist deportation, meaning that Israel would have to use massive violence against innocent civilians to get them to go. 4. Expulsion would create tension between Israel and the United States. Since US interests are promoted by regional stability, destabilization would threaten those interests. US public opinion would probably be against Israel as would some Jewish opinion.

**Elimination of Israel:** 1. While there are 170 million Arabs, these are a diverse group that have never functioned in any unified way. Those in North Africa have their own political concerns and are peripheral to what is happening in Palestine. And in the past, even those Arab states bordering Israel have seldom been able to agree upon a common policy except at a very general ideological level. 2. Looking country by country, there is little threat: Egypt has a peace treaty with Israel, Lebanon is small and weak and has never had a strong army, Jordan is also small and is militarily weak, Saudi Arabia is distant and not a major military force, Iraq is distant and has been devastated by war, and Syria is no match for Israel. 3. The United States would act to protect Israel, something the Arab states know and would not want to confront. 4. Israel has nuclear weapons and would use them. The Arab states do not.

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## EXPULSION OF THE PALESTINIANS

Rabbi Meir Kahane--who was assassinated in 1989 in New York--was widely denounced for his extremism. In 1984 he was elected to the Knesset, but in 1988 his party was banned for its extremist views (when polls showed he might win four or more seats, up from one). Today his views are no longer marginal. Two Knesset parties advocate some form of expulsion. The Molodet party calls for the expulsion of all of the nearly 2 million non-Israeli Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, and Tsomet would expel those living in refugee camps. Israeli public opinion polls show that up to 52% are willing to consider some form of expulsion (Smith Poll, 1992).

Often the advocates of expulsion use euphemisms to make their proposal sound more palatable. They speak of Population Exchanges by which they mean that in the past Jews came to Israel from Arab lands and now Palestinians can reasonably be sent into various Arab

states. They often point to similar events in history. After World War I, Greeks and Turks were massacred and driven out of each other's country in an orgy of blood-letting and personal tragedy; also when India and Pakistan split apart, there were expulsions and massacres. These two examples are cited as precedent, often implying that they are normal and reasonable. Also, remember that the Peel report casually suggested expelling a quarter of a million Palestinians.

Since Jordan would be the primary recipient of expelled Palestinians the advocates of expulsion often say that "There is a Palestinian state: Jordan" or "We don't need a second Palestinian state." Advocates often hint that the Hashemite regime in Jordan would be deposed (by violence) and replaced with a Palestinian government that would receive the Palestinians. Former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon said "There is a Palestinian state. All that is needed is a headline." Presumably the headline would be "King Hussein dead. Arafat in Amman."

Most advocates of this position are from Likud or other rightist parties. They present pseudo-legal arguments based on the fact that the territory awarded to Britain included both historic Palestine (Israel and the Occupied Territories) AND Jordan, and that the British called the whole area Palestine. They say that since Palestine has ALREADY been partitioned, then by definition there is already a Palestinian state and the Palestinians should "go back" to it. In fact, the Mandate of 1922 specifically excluded Jordan. The "Jordan is Palestine" argument is not accepted by Jordanians, Palestinians, Americans, or the UN.

You might mention the board game Risk, in which the world is divided into regions, and players are assigned the task of conquering the world. Some students may have played this game and may know the logic of how rivals deal with emerging powers. What typically happens is that two players will form an alliance and agree not to attack each other for a fixed time, perhaps three turns. Then one will make a break-through and seem on the verge of mass conquest. At this point, the logic of self-survival always overrides the alliance and the threatened partner moves to attack its ally rather than see that ally emerge as an all-powerful player. A similar logic works in international relations. When your ally (or a country towards which you have been neutral) threatens to emerge as untouchable, you may join with previous enemies to prevent its rise. Thus the emergence of Israel as a threat to Jordan or Syria would bring Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other lesser players into the conflict on the side of those threatened Arab states (even if those Arab states had been rivals).

Many Arabs are afraid of the arrival of Russian Jews into Israel. Already several hundred thousand have arrived and there is a potential for up to another million to arrive. Palestinians (and neighboring Arabs) fear the logic of "one million in, one million out." At one point, Prime Minister Shamir said that a big population requires a big Israel. This frightened both Palestinians and Jordanians, and led Iraq to fear that Israel might be planning a preemptive attack on it (since Iraq almost certainly would have come to the defense of Jordan). While most Israelis insist this is not a realistic fear, Palestinians and other Arabs remained worried.

There is no certain or "right" answer to the question of future outcomes. The purpose of the exercise is to make students think logically and systematically about how political systems work. There is a wall sign that says "Take what you want, said God, and pay for it." There is much that a powerful country can do, but the costs are often greater than the benefits. Try to get students to think in terms of costs and benefits of each option. Try to get them to think in terms of what US interests are and should be. And, lastly, ask them to think in terms of what they consider a "fair" solution. (This may involve defining what they mean by fair.)

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## **BACKGROUND: NEGOTIATING POSITIONS**

The Intifada and the Algiers meeting of the PNC changed the negotiation environment. As mentioned earlier, there is no intention to include current negotiating positions in this unit. However, for background informational purposes, it is helpful to know general orientations. In the Palestinian case, these are partially summarized in the section on the Political Program. Other positions and comments are summarized below. In the Israeli case, the task is more difficult because Israelis are polarized between the rightist Likud and center-left Labour. In 1989 Prime Minister Shamir and Defense Minister Rabin outlined their plans, called the Shamir Plan and the Rabin Plan. Some observers said they were similar, others saw them as quite distinct. Remember that these are all positions taken prior to the beginning of talks. Documents and policy statements relevant to the negotiations that began in Madrid in 1991 and subsequent to the 1992 election from all sides are reprinted in the Journal of Palestine Studies, available in university libraries.

### **Shamir Plan:**

1. Israel wants peace based on direct negotiations between governments.
2. "Israel opposes the establishment of an additional Palestinian state in the Gaza District and in the area between Israel and Jordan."
3. Israel will "not conduct negotiations with the PLO."
4. There will be "no change in the status of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza" other than in accordance with Israeli Guidelines.
5. There should be "comprehensive peace" with neighboring states, including trade and diplomatic normalization.
6. There should be an international effort to solve the problem of refugees in camps in the Territories. This would be separate from the negotiations.
7. There should be elections in the Territories to choose a Palestinian negotiating team.
8. There will be a five-year transition period of self-rule during which Palestinians will control "their affairs of daily life." This period will lead to normalization between Israel and Jordan and "the calming of the violence." This "test for co-existence and cooperation" would lead to negotiations on a permanent settlement but self-rule will continue "until the signing of an agreement for a permanent solution."
9. Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and elected representatives of the territories will participate in talks.
10. East Jerusalem is a part of Israel and residents of that city may not participate in the talks.
11. In negotiations over a permanent settlement Israel will claim sovereignty over the Territories.

**Rabin Plan:**

1. "Israeli policy cannot be based upon a single element: suppression (of the Intifada) alone." There must also be a political plan.
2. "Deadlock naturally causes an explosion." Time is not on Israel's side.
3. Jordan cannot credibly negotiate for the Palestinians. Only the PLO or "representatives from the residents of the Territories" can do this.
4. Peace on Israel's eastern border must involve a political settlement with Jordan and the Palestinians.
5. There must be a two-phase settlement, Interim and Permanent.
6. There must be elections to choose "political representation" for the Palestinians. (This was before talks opened, and Rabin wanted a delegation that would be legitimate in the eyes of Palestinians but would exclude the PLO. In fact the delegation that went to Madrid was approved by the PLO and was top heavy with PLO members).
7. The Interim settlement would involve "expanded autonomy or administrative authority and self-rule" with "security matters in Israel's hands." The elected representatives would be the nucleus of the self-governing bodies created.
8. The Permanent Settlement would grow from negotiations between Israelis, Jordanians, Palestinians, and perhaps Egyptians. It would produce either "partnership with Jordan, federative or other" or "federation of some kind with Israel."
9. The goals of these negotiations would be "comprehensive peace."
10. The settlement would be with the "residents living in the Territories" with the matter of the Palestinian refugees left until later.

**The Palestinian Position:**

1. Negotiation should be with the PLO, the recognized representative of the Palestinian people.
2. Elections should be under UN supervision to guarantee free outcomes.
3. There should be a freeze on Israeli settlements prior to negotiations.
4. Any solution should be comprehensive, meaning peace with all regional states and the end of Israeli occupation of Lebanese and Syrian land.
5. Any negotiation must recognize the Palestinians as a national people, not just as "residents" or "refugees."
6. Negotiations must be rooted in international legitimacy meaning UN Resolutions 181, 194, 242, and 336.
7. Negotiations must be under international supervision, involving the major powers on the Security Council, who would guarantee any settlement.
8. A phased settlement is acceptable if there is an integrated plan "whose beginning and end are stipulated in advance." In other words, there could be a period of autonomy if there is an agreement upon self-determination afterwards.
9. During the interim period, there should be Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and a UN force brought in to guarantee the settlement.
10. It is unrealistic to call for an end to the Intifada prior to talks. The cause of the Intifada is the occupation. When the occupation ends, the Intifada will end.

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**THE ISRAELI-PLO ACCORDS**

On September 13, 1993 President Bill Clinton hosted a White House public signing of PLO-Israeli document that normalized

relations between the Jewish Palestinian peoples. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat signed for the PLO and Foreign Minister Peres signed for Israel as Yitzhak Rabin watched. Arafat and Rabin shook hands, standing at the table upon which the Camp David Accords had been signed in 1978. It was a historic moment comparable to the first meeting of South African President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela.

The Declaration of Principles (commonly called Accords) provided for the setting up of a Palestinian government in Gaza and Jericho as the first step in a total normalization of relations between the two peoples. The Accords and other documents are included in the unit.

### Three Surprises

Assessing historical events is always risky until time has passed, but these agreements seem to warrant such assessment. Since nobody predicted what would happen, we should comment upon what in retrospect was truly surprising and what was not.

First, it was *not* surprising that Israel agreed to withdraw from the Occupied Territories. Labor party leaders had been talking of this for two decades, given minor modifications of the pre-1967 border. Also, the stresses and costs of the Intifada were very high in both Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Nor was it surprising that Israel agreed to deal with the PLO. Mr. Shamir had agreed to this by going to Madrid for talks. And in 1993 when Israel allowed Faisal Hussein to head the Palestinian delegation, they accepted Arafat's closest ally in the Occupied Territories. Israel had long recognized that the PLO was the political body preferred by Palestinians.

What was surprising was that they agreed to meet Arafat and to acknowledge him and the PLO as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people. Israel had always hoped to assemble a group of "national leaders" who would substitute for the PLO. They also hoped to avoid dealing directly with Arafat, who had been demonized over the years for various acts of violence linked to his organization. Agreeing to deal directly with Arafat and the PLO was a major decision. As Rabin said at the time, they realized that Arafat and the PLO were the only ones able to sign an agreement and deliver upon their promises. Arafat's version of Rabin's decision was quite similar: "He is a pragmatist."

Second, Israel seems to agree that there must be concessions on East Jerusalem. If correct, this is a major change in the Israeli position. It is discussed more fully below.

Third, a related issue is whether there will be a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem. The evidence points to yes. By creating a Palestinian parliament and a Palestinian police force, by declaring the West Bank and Gaza to be an integral whole, and by allowing Palestinians from East Jerusalem to vote in and

be subject to the authority of the new Palestinian parliament, the agreement seems to suggest that a Palestinian state is on its way. Those on the Israeli right still insist that Israel agreed only to autonomy but in Washington, Foreign Minister Peres said that "we do not seek to shape your lives or determine your destiny...." Such a statement, when Palestinians overwhelmingly want a Palestinian state, points in only one direction.

### **Scenarios for Implementation**

As we watch from the euphoric perspective of freshly-signed documents, we must realistically anticipate problems in implementation. There are Optimistic and Pessimistic scenarios for what could happen next. Difficulties emerge from ambiguities in the texts, the intentions of the parties, secret agreements, and the ability of officials to deliver and to overcome internal opposition. The Optimistic scenario is that the Accords will be implemented in such a way as to satisfy both parties enough to normalize relations between them, to end the occupation, and to stop the killing. A Pessimistic scenario means one side or the other will insist upon more than is reasonable, that internal opposition groups will gain the upper hand, or that extremist elements will be uncontrollable.

One less optimistic scenario is that the Israelis have in mind the Allon Plan or the 1970s as a reasonable outcome. This seems to be the fallback position of the Jewish right. The Allon plan provided that Gaza, the central highlands of the West Bank, and a corridor near Jericho would go to Jordan. Israel would annex Jerusalem and much of the rest. This would transfer most of the Palestinian population to Jordan but would leave much of the land with Israel. It would also leave the Palestinians without their own state. If this were the direction of talks then they could break down and the Intifada revive. The Allon plan is discussed below.

A second scenario talks could lead to a Palestinian state, most likely federated with Jordan. This appears to be the thrust of the agreement and the associated public statements. If so, it would satisfy most of the Palestinians clustered around Arafat, would meet international criteria for a settlement, would produce complete political separation of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples, and would make possible future economic and political cooperation not only between Israel and Palestine but also with Jordan. In this scenario, Palestine would become a bridge between Israel and the Arab world.

### **Opposition to the Agreements**

There are three types of opponents to the agreement. They exist in mirror image form on the Israeli and Palestinian sides.

**Religious Elements** may believe there is some holy mandate that contradicts the partition of the land. Some Jewish religious leaders believe it is inconsistent with the Torah to yield any land currently held by Israel. Others see Eretz Israel as including land beyond current boundaries into Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. The



Hamas charter says specifically that all of Palestine must be an Islamic state. Some (but not all) people holding such views are violent.

**Pragmatic Skeptics** may accept the principle of a negotiated settlement but believe the agreement is flawed, that it will not work, that it sold out too much. Israelis tend to say Arafat cannot deliver, that certain security issues are at stake, that Palestinian extremists might control the council, that there should never be a Palestinian state. Palestinians fear that the Israelis will never yield much more than they have already yielded, that the refugees will be forgotten, that there will be no Palestinian state, and that the Palestinian entity will be so weak and vulnerable that it will not work and will not bring peace. There are also many who fear Resolution 194 will not be honored and that those who want to return to their homes in Haifa or elsewhere inside Israel itself will not be allowed to do so.

**The Extremist Factions** are definitely present. Abu Nidal is a Palestinian renegade who has tried to kill Arafat over the decades and will try again. Other radical elements (Abu Musa's Fatah Uprising and Ahmed Jibril's PFLP-GC) are also there. On the Israeli side, the Jewish Underground of the early 1980's tried to blow up the Islamic Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and were stopped by police as they entered the site with explosives. Various settler groups have threatened to declare an independent Jewish state in the Occupied Territories and have received public encouragement from military leaders such as Ariel Sharon. Some Israelis fear there is a potential for violence and civil war.

On the Palestinian side, some of the strongest opponents of the agreements are in exile in Lebanon or Jordan or Syria. Within the territories, Hamas and others are capable of causing damage. The Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories are also a threat. Settlers as a class have historically tended to violently oppose decisions that leave them under the authority of native populations. The French in Algeria and the whites in Rhodesia are relevant examples (if not entirely parallel cases). Both led uprisings against their own government. Israelis are hoping that the announcement of a phased settlement will defuse a settler rebellion. They anticipate a drop in settlement property values, a movement of settlers back into Israel, and a weakened ability of settler extremists to do more than protest. The settlers are wild card. They are armed and organized.

**The Arab States:** There is minimal opposition from the Arab states, mostly comments that they believe the PLO could have gotten a better deal, or that Arafat should have consulted with other Arab leaders. The Jordanians were most distressed, out of concern that they would be left with the several hundred thousand Palestinians living in refugee camps.

**An Assessment:** There is no reason to believe that killing and other violence will decline in the short term. Assassinations and attacks on civilians by Israelis and Palestinians will continue as extremist elements maneuver for position. Both sides want to

maximize their gains and fear that the other side is not negotiating in good faith. Settlers will try to resist a complete pull-out, Palestinians will keep pressure on Israeli forces and populations to withdraw. On both sides, there is evidence that resistance will remain within parameters. The PLO has worked out agreements with Hamas and its leftist opposition to create a new coordinating council, to refrain from attacks upon each other, and to express disagreements in non-military ways. On the Jewish side, there is also an effort to rally behind the flag, with vigorous dissent being expressed but signs that opposition will be within certain non-violent parameters. Both national peoples have a sense that they are threatened and vulnerable and must hang together to prevent further disaster. This will serve to inhibit attacks which might completely undermine authority.

### **What Do the Accords Provide?**

**Palestine Government:** There will be a Palestinian government with an initial base in Gaza and Jericho, but with authority over the whole of Gaza and the West Bank, (with specified exceptions). Most observers have said the document speaks of the city of Jericho but in fact it refers to "the Jericho area," which may mean the larger Jericho district even in the first phase.

**Palestine Council:** This government will be headed by an elected council, effectively a parliament, to be chosen in July, 1994 in a free election monitored by an international observers. The document says that "In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will insure public order." The election proposal of the Shamir government did not provide for international supervision or withdrawal of Israeli troops.

**Unitary Integrity of the Occupied Territories:** The Accords view the West Bank and Gaza as "a single territorial unit". This is a significant statement that puts the whole of the area under the ultimate authority of the Palestinian government. The agreement also states that the "jurisdiction of the Council will cover the West Bank and Gaza," again affirming their unity.

**Israeli Military Withdrawal:** Israeli troops will soon withdraw from populated areas to specified outposts. Foreign forces will be brought in during the transition period. Confrontations between soldiers and Palestinian youth that occur daily and produce death and injury should drop.

**Strong Police Force:** Some things are too difficult to concede early on. One of them is the idea of a Palestinian army. The document provides for a Palestinian police force but specifies that it will be a "strong" force. One thinks of Japan which is constitutionally prohibited from having an army but which has the only police force in the world with a navy.

**Transition Period:** There will be a period up to five years before final status and the transition to Palestinian rule is complete. Further negotiations begin immediately. After two or three years an advanced stage will commence. Details of what these stages mean are vague except they lead to a final agreement.

**Future Negotiations Based on Resolutions 242 and 338:** The document says "It is understood that the interim arrangements are an integral part of the whole peace process and that the negotiations on the permanent status will lead to the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." The earlier negotiating position of the PLO was that they would agree to an interim accord if it were the first step towards an ultimate outcome. Most likely, PLO negotiators felt this was achieved. Also note force is inadmissible. Full literal implementation of 242 would require full Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. This seems unlikely, although it remains the PLO position.

**Limits on Council Authority:** For the time being, the Palestinian Council will have no authority over Israeli military positions, Jewish settlements, Israelis in the Occupied Territories for any reason, and East Jerusalem. The document says "Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis." Also during the transition period "Israel will continue to be responsible for external security, and for internal security and public order of settlements and Israelis."

**Jerusalem:** Including Jerusalem on the agenda was predictable and necessary but shocking to some Israelis. As mentioned elsewhere, there are at least five separate Jerusalems, some clearly Jewish, some traditionally Palestinian. Israel had earlier put Jerusalem on the table by allowing Faisal Hussein, a Jerusalem resident, to participate in the talks. Shamir had earlier insisted that to allow Jerusalem residents on the Palestinian team would acknowledge that Jerusalem was Palestinian. Almost all Israelis consider Jerusalem in its current entirety to be Israeli. Rabin repeated over and over again the Israeli phrase that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish people and that it will remain forever united and under Israeli sovereignty. But the original letter of agreement that began the Madrid talks, and the Accords themselves emphasized that the implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 were the goal of the talks. And these resolutions specified that the acquisition of territory by force was inadmissible. Rabin's emphatic assertion in Washington before the signing was that if Arafat wanted Jerusalem he should "forget it." But as Arafat said, "He is talking of Jewish Jerusalem, not Arab Jerusalem," i.e., West not East.

The election provisions specify that Palestinians living in Jerusalem vote for the Palestinian council. Including them under the authority of the council clearly classifies them as Palestinian rather than Israeli. Israeli law in fact never considered them citizens, although it gave them residency rights.

Quite possibly, there will be a mix of sovereignties. A good optimistic guess might be East Jerusalem to Palestine, West Jerusalem to Israel, a condominium over the Ancient City, and certain Jewish settlements under Palestinian sovereignty but with special status. There has also been talk of swaps of towns, perhaps Maale Adumim to Israel and Um Al Fahm to Palestine.

**Refugees:** Many Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria were bitterly disappointed that there was no specific reference to the right of refugees to return, especially the refugees of 1948. Jordan was also upset that this was not included in the Accords, since they fear being left with camp refugees who are not fully integrated into Jordanian society. The document says that Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and the PLO will establish a committee to regulate return of 1967 refugees. The subject of the 1948 refugees is held for later discussion.

**Possible Areas of Cooperation:** High among areas of future cooperation are water resources. This is a critical area where all parties have interests. The document refers to "management of water resources" and "water rights," and "equitable utilization of water resources" as topics for discussion.

**Mediterranean Sea - Dead Sea Canal:** The Dead Sea is drying up. Some decades ago there was a proposal to drain water from the Mediterranean into the Dead Sea to revive it. Ecologists were horrified and Israel dropped the plan. There has been recent talk of reviving it. It is mentioned in the Accord.

**Topic of Discussion:** Permanent status negotiations will include "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest."

**A Note on Terminology:** Throughout this unit there has been an effort to use neutral terminology, following official US government practice wherever possible. Thus we write of Occupied Territories rather than Palestinian territories (preferred by Arabs) or Disputed or Administered Territories (preferred by Jews). After September, 1993 it seems logical to refer to the Palestinian territories or even to Palestine.

## The Israeli-Jordanian Agenda

The day after Israel and the PLO signed their document, Jordan and Israel signed a document of their own, modestly called an Agenda. It had been worked out the previous October but Jordan had declined to sign lest it appear to betray other Arab parties. (Sadat had worked out a separate settlement at Camp David, leaving other Arab parties out in the cold. This had earned him the name of traitor. Jordan was not willing to do this.)

Among the provisions of the Agenda were the following:

**Negotiations:** Negotiations will be on the basis of "242 and 338 in all their aspects." Arafat used almost this exact term during

the Washington signing.

**Non conventional Weapons:** There is a "mutual commitment" not to threaten or to use weapons against each other "including conventional and non conventional mass destruction weapons." Since Jordan has no such weapons, this is clearly a reference to Israel's nuclear arsenal. Arab states are concerned that Israel could use those weapons. Israel commits itself not to do so. There is also a commitment to "work towards a Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction, conventional and non conventional weapons."

**Refugees:** There is a commitment to resolve the refugee situation "in accordance with international law." Presumably Resolution 194 would be one primary consideration.

**Boundaries:** Jordan reaffirms what it stated in 1988: that it does not claim any part of the West Bank as Jordanian territory. Israel affirms that it claims no land beyond the Jordan river. The Agenda does not define Israel's eastern border except that it does not include current Jordanian territory.

**Water:** Water is on the Agenda, specifically "rightful water shares" and "ways to alleviate water shortages." In Amman, homes get water two days a week and must haul water at other times.

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## THE ALLON PLAN

Yigael Allon was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs before his death in 1980. As a Labor party leader, he advocated what was called the Allon Plan. The plan was based upon two assumptions. First, that Israel had security needs and should annex parts of the occupied territories. Second, that Israel should remain a Jewish state based in democratic principles and this meant releasing most of the Palestinians brought under its control in 1967. Allon's proposal was that the densely populated areas of the West Bank be returned to Jordan to create a Jordan-Palestine state. He originally proposed that Gaza be annexed (without its refugees) but later included Gaza among the areas to be transferred. Most of Sinai would be returned to Egypt except Sharm-el-Sheikh and Rafah near Gaza. Most of Syria's Golan province would be kept by Israel, which would also retain most of the Jordan Valley, the Rift escarpment above the valley, East Jerusalem, and the Gush Etzion area around Hebron.

In an article in *Foreign Affairs* ("Israel: The Case for Defensible Borders," October 1976), Allon outlined certain "strategic security principles" that were the basis of the plan. In presenting these, he assumed that among Arabs there were "more extreme elements" and "other elements." "All other things considered, it is in strengthening these latter elements to the extent that they become decisive in the Arab world that the best chance lies to achieve compromise and reconciliation between Israel and the

Arab states..." Israel would withdraw from "territories" occupied in 1967 if the new borders provided an "essential minimum of security" with "minimal strategic depth."

In Jerusalem there could be self-regulation of the holy sites and "it might be possible to base the municipal structure of the city upon subdistricts that take ethnic and religious criteria into account." Gaza would be linked to the West Bank with a "land route" (not a corridor). There would be a "selective settlement policy" in the newly annexed areas but Israel would "forfeit the densely populated heartland of Judea and Samaria." The returned areas would be demilitarized. The plan was logically linked to Allon's Jericho Plan of 1974 which proposed returning Jericho to Jordan as a first step.

Allon observed that "one does not have to be a military expert to easily identify the critical defects of the armistice lines that existed until June 4, 1967. A considerable part of these lines is without any topographical security value; and, of no less importance, the lines fail to provide Israel with the essential minimum of strategic depth. The gravest problem is on the eastern boundary, where the entire width of the coastal plain varies between 10 and 15 miles, where the main centers of Israel's population, including Tel Aviv and its suburbs, are situated, and where the situation of Jerusalem is especially perilous. Within these lines a single successful first strike by the Arab armies would be sufficient to dissect Israel at more than one point, to sever its essential living arteries, and to confront it with dangers that no other state would be prepared to face. The purpose of defensible borders is thus to correct this weakness, to provide Israel with the requisite minimal strategic depth, as well as lines which have topographical strategic significance."

The arguments of the Allon Plan were revived in the wake of the 1993 Accords. Israelis with doubts about the Accords considered it a fallback position that would maintain Israeli control of key territories. Many Palestinians also fear that this is the intention of the Rabin government and that Israel had not shifted from the thinking of the 1970s. The Allon Plan would not allow for a Palestinian state, would put Palestinians under Jordanian authority, and would transfer key parts of Palestinian territory to Israel.

It is always risky to make projections but it seems likely that Israeli elements will call for implementing the 1993 Accords by some kind of Palestinian autonomy under a modified Allon Plan. One cannot see how such an outcome would solve the problem. If implemented, it most likely would produce either a breakdown of talks or a discrediting of the Palestinian leadership, a revival of the Intifada, and a renewal of the violence and political instability that characterized the years before the Accords. The objective conditions of the conflict--specifically the ability of the Palestinians under occupation to resist--has so changed reality that the Allon Plan no longer seems viable or relevant.

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## The Religious Significance of Jerusalem

### Jews:

Jerusalem was a city before the Hebrews arrived. Moses, the greatest Hebrew prophet, was denied by God the right to visit it. David chose it as his capital because it was neutral vis-à-vis the squabbling of Hebrew tribes. Solomon built his temple there but after his reign the ten northern tribes seceded and moved their capital elsewhere. The northern and southern kingdoms were destroyed as was the first temple. It was rebuilt by Herod and was again destroyed by the Romans. By the second century, the focus of Judaism shifted away from the temple into the diaspora, but for over two millennia Jerusalem has remained a symbol of a people hunted and endangered. The remaining support wall of the second temple is today a pilgrimage site for Jews and is called the Western Wall. Some religious Jews look to a time when the temple will be rebuilt on its ancient site where the Dome of the Rock stands today.

### Christians:

Early Christianity did not see Jerusalem as significant. Jesus put his focus on the kingdom of God, not a place. During his lifetime, he predicted the destruction of the temple. His final command to his disciples de-emphasized even the land itself: "Go forth into the world and baptize the nations..." Still, Jesus spent part of his life in Jerusalem, had his adult ceremony in the temple, was crucified, buried, and resurrected there. Christians later received Jerusalem as a focus of faith. In Madaba, Jordan, a sixth-century Christian map shows it as the center of the world. For centuries it has been the focus of pilgrimages, and European crusaders fought for nearly two hundred years to control it. To many Christians (especially Evangelicals) it will be the focus of the Final Days and the return of Christ. The Vatican also sees it as a special place to be protected from domination by any one religion.

### Muslims:

Mohammed spent most of his life in Arabia. As a young man, he visited Syria but never Jerusalem until after God began to send him revelations. Then one night a divine event occurred. God put him on a winged animal, Al Buraq (traditionally called a horse), and flew to Jerusalem. This is the famous Nocturnal Journey described in the Koran (17:1): "Glory to God Who did take his Servant for a Journey by night From the Sacred Mosque To the Farthest Mosque Whose precincts We did Bless--in order that We Might show him some of Our Signs." Mohammed tethered the horse at the base of the mount near what Jews call the Western Wall. Muslims call the open area below the mount Al Buraq.

In Jerusalem, Mohammed climbed a mysterious ladder of light that took him into heaven where he experienced the presence of God and was told that believers should pray five times a day

facing Jerusalem. A later revelation said to pray facing Mecca, but Muslims still call Jerusalem "the first Qibleh (direction of prayer) and the third holiest site" (after Mecca and Medina).

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USS Liberty

## THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

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5. *Middle East Journal*. Articles, chronology.

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RESTORING OUR CONSCIENCE AND HUMAN VALUES




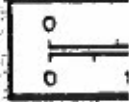
# THE JEWISH PALE OF SETTLEMENT IN RUSSIA, 1835 - 1917

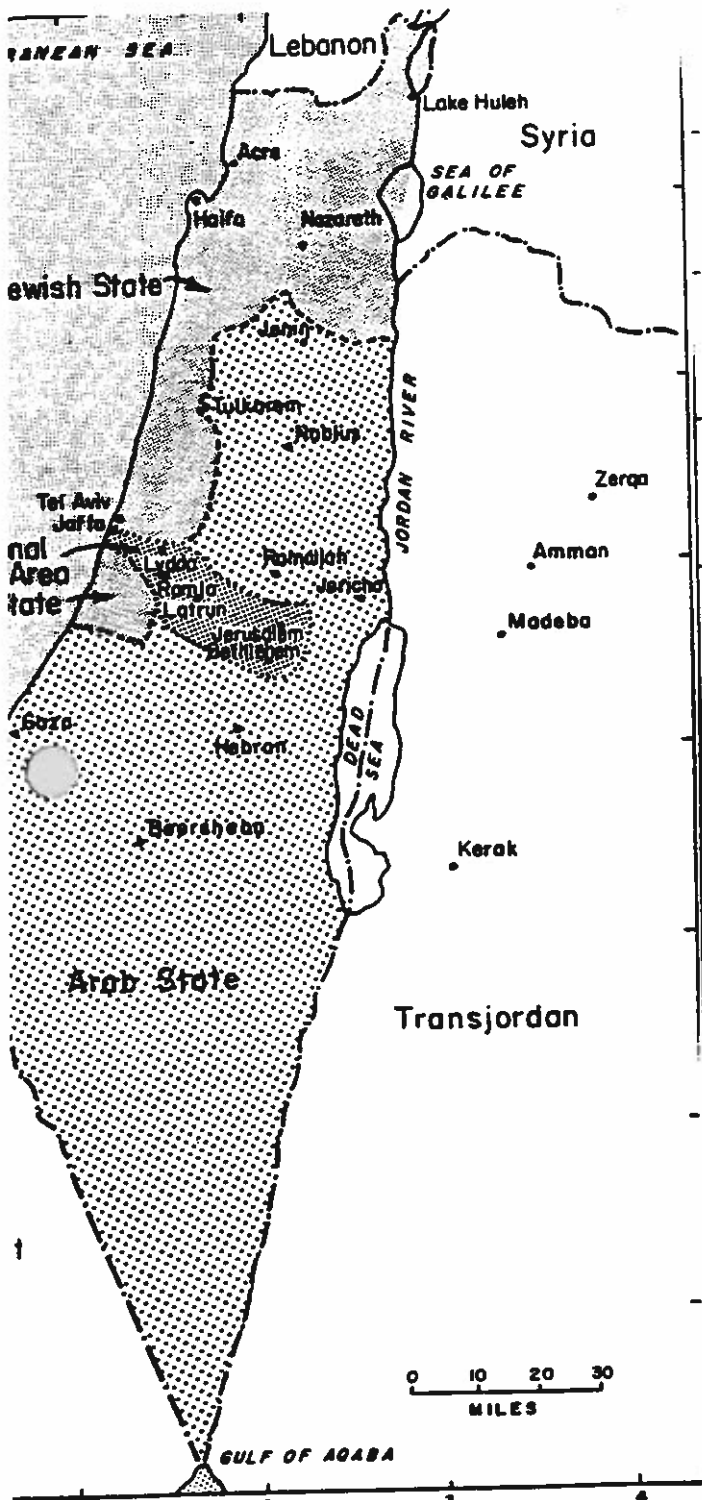


 The Pale of Settlement. Russian Jews were confined to this area by laws of 1795 and 1835. By 1897 there were more than 5 million Jews in the Pale.

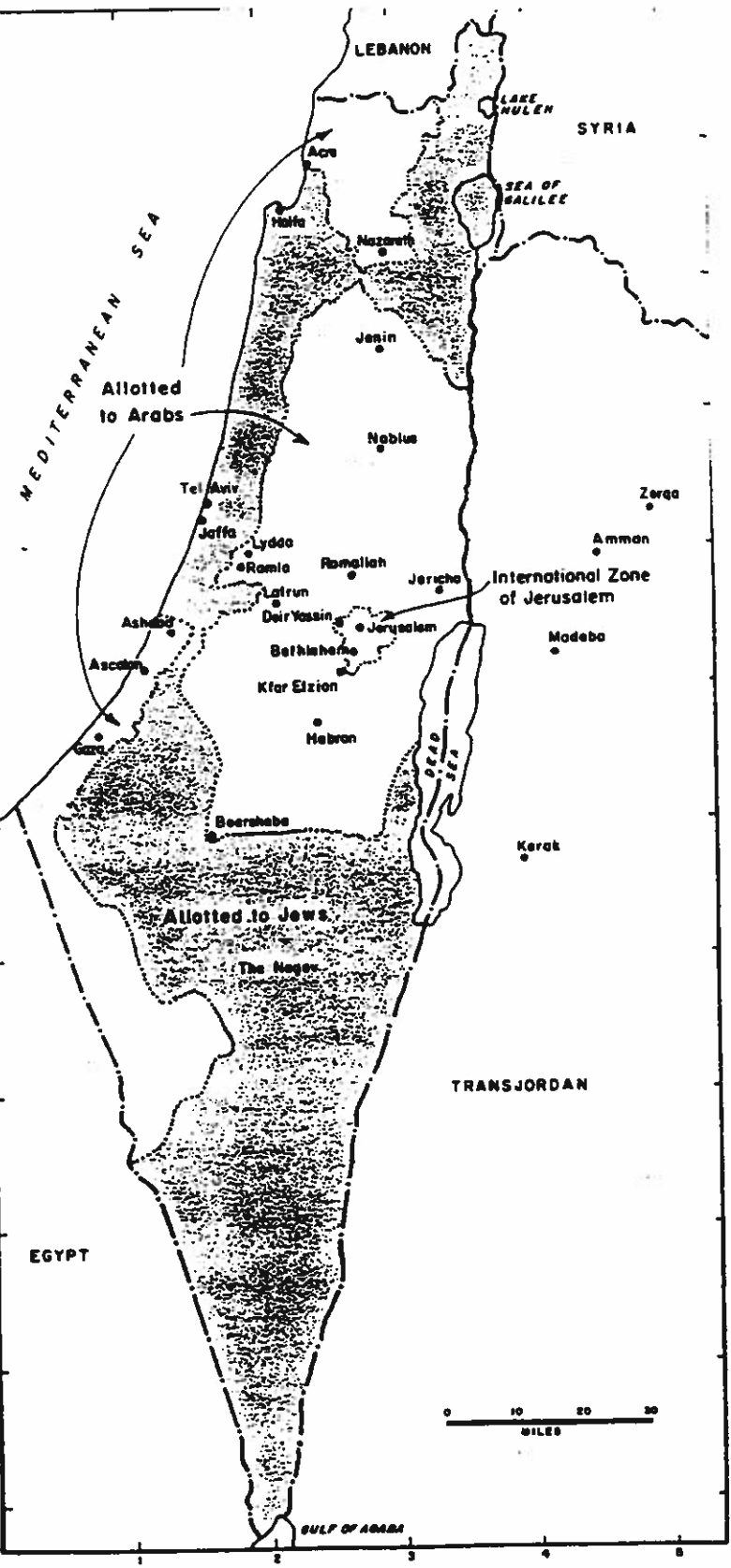
 Towns within the Pale which were themselves barred to Jews without special residence permits.

 Towns outside the Pale with Jewish inhabitants (figures for 1897).

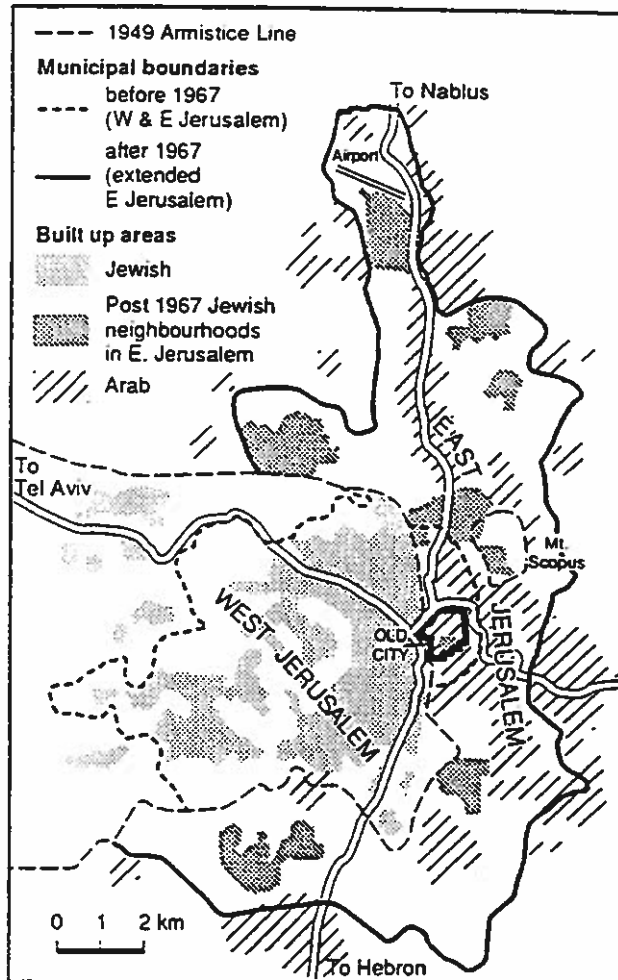




PEEL COMMISSION PARTITION PLAN, 1937



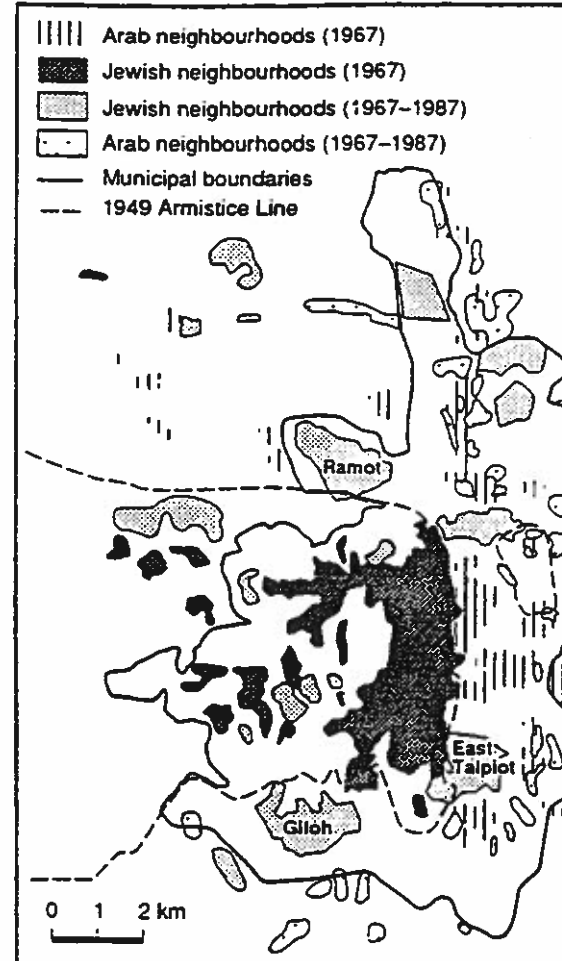
U.N. PARTITION PLAN, NOVEMBER 29, 1947



#### Master Plan for Metropolitan Jerusalem, 1982

Following the capture of East Jerusalem in 1967, the Israeli government annexed the newly gained areas and declared a 'united Jerusalem'. The new municipal boundaries were delimited in such a way as to maximise the territorial extent and the Jewish population, while minimising the Palestinian presence within the jurisdictional area.

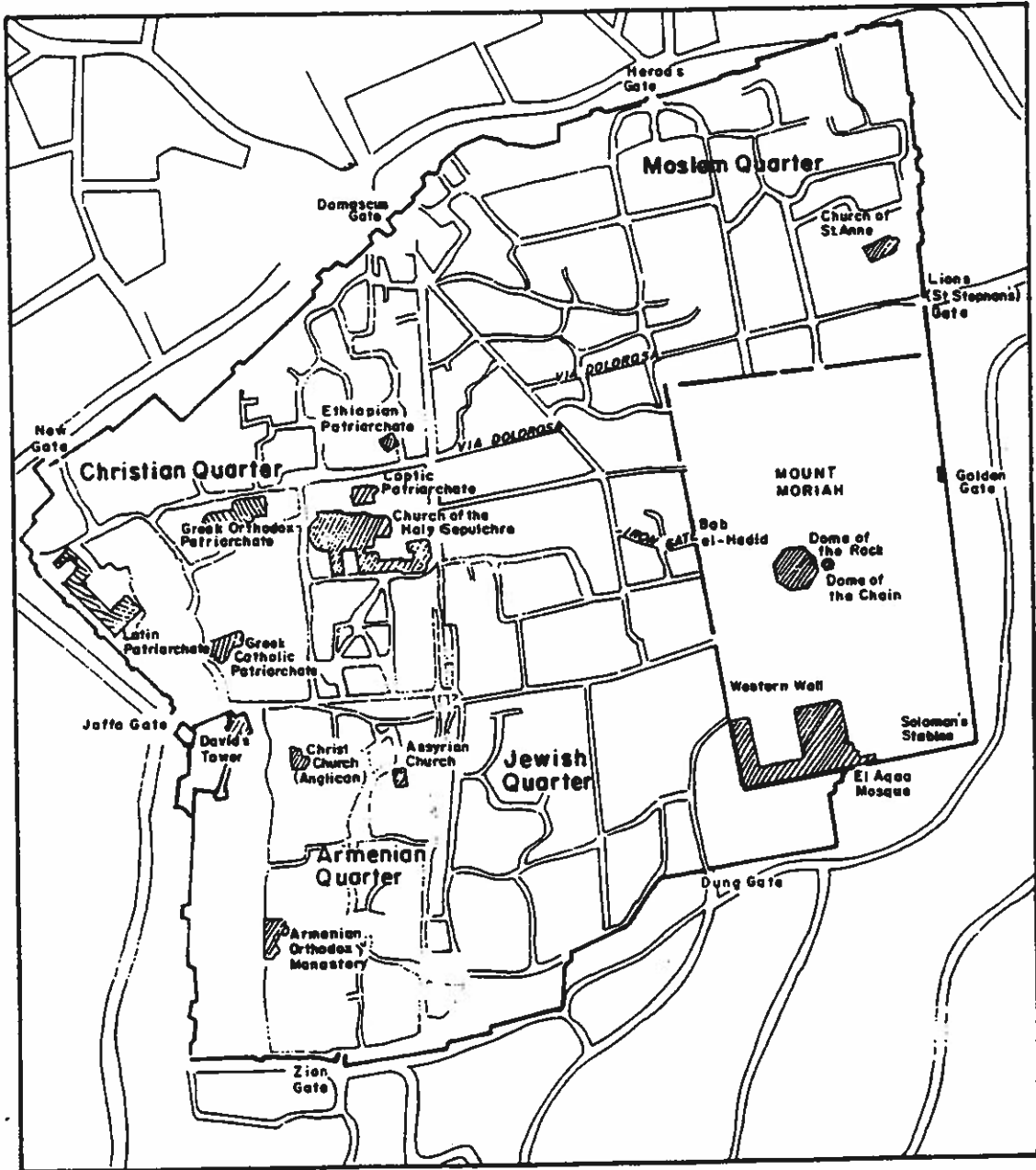
Source: Benvenisti and Khayat (1988).



#### Jewish and Arab neighbourhoods Jerusalem, 1983

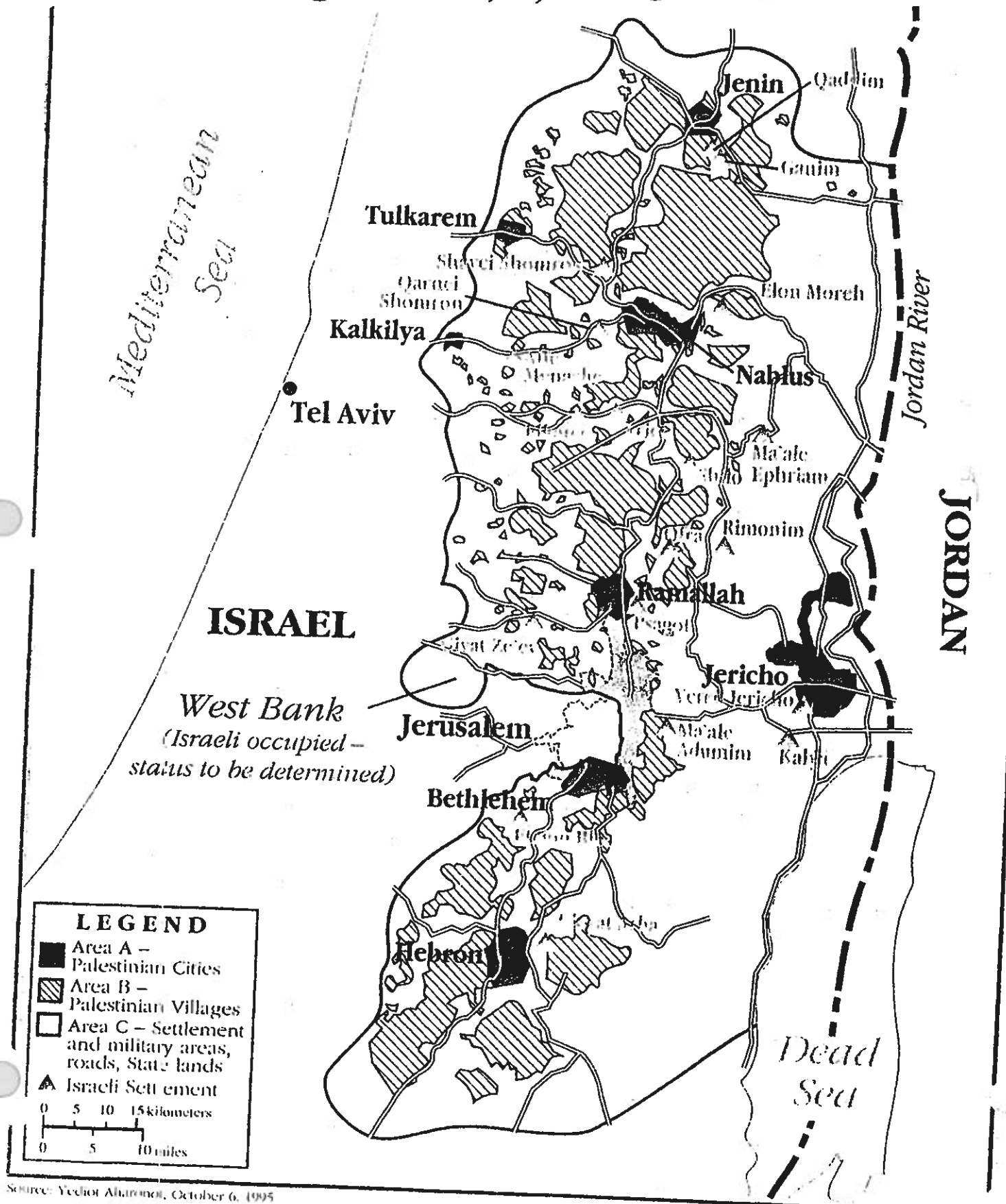
After 1967, the Israeli government embarked upon a project of constructing massive Jewish urban neighbourhoods to the north, south and east of Jerusalem. These new neighbourhoods (with over 70,000 residents in the mid-1980s) were founded as a means of proclaiming Jewish sovereignty over the whole of the city and in order to prevent any future possibility of repartition.

## Jerusalem-- boundaries and neighborhoods



Jerusalem-- the old city

# Oslo II Map Outlining Areas A, B, and C



Source: Yechiel Aharonov, October 6, 1995



# The Events of 1948 and the Palestinian Refugees

Summary by Ron Stockton

We can learn much about history from first-hand reports. What follows are three types of reports: contemporary documents, the perspectives of those who were present, and the results of recent scholarship. There is an exceptional amount of polemical rhetoric around these events. A polemic is an argument designed to prove that you are right and some rival is wrong. There is a Jewish-Arab polemic and a Jewish-Jewish polemic [between the Ben-Gurion/Haganah/Labour left and the Begin/Herut/Likud right]. These polemics are only marginally included. Tessler discusses them more fully.<sup>1</sup> (Note: There is a useful index of names at the end of the document).

**The New Historians:** When Menachem Begin became Prime Minister in 1977, he was so stung by allegations that he was a terrorist that he began to open the state archives to researchers. More archives were opened under the 50-year rule in 1997 and 1998. These produced a wave of new research based on documents, journals, reports, and minutes. Israelis saw themselves as peaceful and accommodating and the Arab side as the problem. Five books shook the way Israelis saw this history. These were Simha Flapan's *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*; Benny Morris' *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949*; Ilan Pappé's *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951*; Avi Shlaim's *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, The Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*; and Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis*. Others have followed subsequently.

**Background:** While the Israelis refer to all of the conflicts of this time as their War of Independence, in fact fighting in Palestine went through three distinct stages with different characteristics and different military forces. 1) A Jewish-British War. Fighting started in 1944 when Zionist forces began attacks on British positions and leaders. This involved the assassination of Lord Moyne and the attack on the King David Hotel, where British forces were headquartered. 2) Jewish-Palestinian clashes. In November, 1947, when Britain announced they were unilaterally withdrawing and UN Resolution 181 voted to create a Jewish state, this became a Jewish-Palestinian War as Palestinian irregulars fought Jewish forces, and Jewish leaders tried to push beyond the territory assigned to them by the UN and tried to control the mixed towns and cities of Palestine. 3) The Palestine War of 1948. In May, 1948 when Jewish leaders proclaimed a Jewish State, Arab armies attacked and it became an Arab-Israeli war. This ended with the Armistice of January, 1948.

Benny Morris says the flight of refugees fell into three stages: **Stage I:** November, 1947 to April, 1948. The UN proposed the partition of Palestine & creation of two states, one Jewish, one Palestinian. Fighting broke out within the proposed Jewish sector between Jewish units & ill-organized Palestinian units, usually village militias. Many wealthy Palestinians evacuated their families, especially from port cities and the coastal plain. **Stage II.** April 1948 the massacre of Deir Yassin provoked a rush of refugees who feared widespread massacres. **Stage III.** May, 1948 Israel proclaimed itself a state. Neighboring Arab armies attacked. Israel sets out to conquer "Arab" parts of Palestine; fighting especially hard in Arab populated areas such as Galilee, in central Palestine, and around Jerusalem.

In 1947 there were 1.3m Arabs in Palestine, being 2/3 of the population of the Mandate. The Jews had 1/3 of the population and 6% of the land (20% of the productive land). According to a 1946 Census, just under 50% of the population in that area designated by UN 181 for the Jewish state was Jewish (although by 1948 it was over 55%). In the area designated for the Palestinian state but ultimately captured by Israel and incorporated into its state, the population was 97% Palestinian. By the end of the fighting there were 165,000 Palestinians left within Israel. 119,000 were Muslim, 35,000 Christian, 15,000 Druzes. 32,000 were urban/town dwellers, 120,000 villagers, 18,000 nomads. 30,000 were internal refugees, "having fled from one part of the state to the other during the fighting." By May, 1949

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<sup>1</sup> The reader unfamiliar with these events might want to check the Who's Who appendix.

final, the question must be boldly faced and firmly dealt with. It calls for the highest statesmanship on the part of all concerned." There must be a "transfer, voluntary or otherwise, of land and population."

**Joseph Weitz**, official in charge of Jewish settlement in his diary, 1940: "Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country...We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country. The only solution is a Palestine, at least Western Palestine [west of the Jordan river] without Arabs...And there is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries, to transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe, should be left...Only after this transfer will the country be able to absorb the millions of our own brethren. There is no other way out."

**British Labour Party platform**, 1944: The platform referred to "the unspeakable atrocities of the cold and calculated German Nazi plan to kill all the Jews in Europe." It called for the removal of Palestinians from Palestine and their replacement with Jews. "Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land and let their settlement elsewhere be carefully organized and generously financed. The Arabs have many wide territories of their own." Regarding the ethics of the policy, "Palestine surely is a case, on human grounds and to promote a stable settlement, for a transfer of population."

**Former President Hoover** (1945) called for "engineering" the removal of Palestinians to Iraq. The American Zionist Emergency Council responded: "The Zionist movement has never advocated the transfer of Palestine's Arab population...nevertheless when all long-accepted remedies seem to fail it is time to consider new approaches. The Hoover Plan...represents an important new approach in the realization of which Zionists would be happy to co-operate with the great powers and the Arabs."

### **The Traditional Israeli Position on Palestinian Refugees**

**Israeli Foreign Office**: "The government of Israeli must disclaim any responsibility for the creation of this problem. The charge that these Arabs were forcibly driven out by Israeli authorities is wholly false; on the contrary, everything possible was done to prevent the exodus. The question of return cannot be divorced from its military context. As long as the state of war continues, the refugees would be a disruptive element in the maintenance of internal law and order and a formidable fifth column for eternal enemies." (Memo to US, July, 1948 in Pappé, p. 214).

**Ben-Gurion before The Knesset**: "The Arabs' exit from Palestine...began immediately after the UN resolution, from the areas earmarked for the Jewish state. And we have explicit documents testifying that they left Palestine following instructions by the Arab leaders, with the Mufti at their head, under the assumption that the invasion of the Arab armies at the expiration of the Mandate will destroy the Jewish state and push all the Jews into the sea, dead or alive." (1961, quoted in Pappé, pp 88-89).

**Abba Eban**, Israeli Ambassador speaking to the UN in 1958: "The Arab refugee problem was caused by a war of aggression, launched by the Arab States against Israel in 1947 and 1948...Once you determine the responsibility for that war, you have determined the responsibility for the refugee problem" (p. 151). He follows with a series of assertions to show that the Palestinians and the Arab states are morally responsible, that Israel is innocent of wrongdoing and free of any responsibility. Eban's points: Palestinians Urged to Flee by Arab Leaders; Misery is Result of Unlawful Resort to Force by Arabs; Arab Governments Must Accept Responsibility; Refugee Problem Cannot Be Solved by Repatriation; Arab Leaders Block Solution for Political Reasons; 450,000 Jewish Refugees From Arab Lands Absorbed by Israel; Refugees Closely Akin to Arabs in Host Countries; Arab Governments Prefer Refugee Status Quo; Resettlement Among Host Countries is the Only Solution; Repatriation is a Threat

**Mordechai Ra'an**, Likud commander at Deir Yassin, on how and why he held a press conference and fabricated the figure of 254 dead. "On that day I did not know, could not have known, how many Arabs had been killed. No one counted the bodies. I told the reporters that 254 were killed so that a big figure would be published, so that the Arabs would panic not only in Jerusalem but across the country, and this goal was accomplished. Reporters, journalists, researchers, and historians treat it as if it were an established fact requiring no investigation, and nobody bothered to check what the true figure was." (Quoted in *ZOA*, 1997).

**Begin:** Begin wrote of how "Arab propaganda" created a "crude atrocity story" of over 240 deaths. Ben-Gurion's followers, "apprehensive of the Irgun's growing strength and popular support" also used this fabricated figure "to denounce and smear the Irgun." But Begin says the results were not what the propagandists wanted: "Arabs throughout the country, induced to believe wild tales of 'Irgun butchery', were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. This mass flight soon developed into a maddened, uncontrollable stampede. Of the about 800,000 Arabs who lived on the present territory of the State of Israel, only some 165,000 are still there. The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be overestimated." (Begin, *The Revolt*, p. 164).

## 2. Galilee

**Yigael Allon**, writing on May 10, a month after Deir Yassin and five days before Israel declared independence, when the Haganah anticipated an Arab invasion: "There were before us only five days, before the threatening date, the 15th of May. We saw a need to claim the inner Galilee and to create a Jewish territorial succession in the entire area of the upper Galilee. The long battles had weakened our forces, and before us stood great duties of blocking the routes of the [anticipated] Arab invasion. We therefore looked for means which did not force us into employing force, in order to cause the tens of thousands of sulky Arabs who remained in Galilee to flee, for in case of an Arab invasion these were likely to strike us from the rear. We tried to use a tactic which took advantage of the impression created by the fall of Safed and the [Arab] defeat in the area which was cleaned by Operation Metateh--a tactic which worked miraculously well. I gathered all the Jewish mukhtars [mayors] who have contact with Arabs in different villages, and asked them to whisper in the ears of some Arabs, that a great Jewish reinforcement has arrived in Galilee and that it is going to burn all villages of the Huleh. They should suggest to these Arabs, as their friends, escape while there is time...The flight numbered myriads." (*Book of Palmach*, cited in *Israel: A Country Study*, p. 49).

## 3. Yitahak Rabin on Lydda and Ramleh

"While the fighting was still in progress, we had to grapple with a troublesome problem, for whose solution we could not draw upon any previous experience: the fate of the civilian population of Lod and Ramle, numbering some 50,000. Not even Ben-Gurion could offer any solution, and during the discussions at operational headquarters, he remained silent, as was his habit in such situations. Clearly, we could not leave Lod's hostile and armed populace in our rear, where it could endanger the supply route to Yiftach (another brigade), which was advancing eastward. We walked outside, Ben-Gurion accompanying us. Allon repeated his question: 'What is to be done with the population?' B.G. waived his hand in a gesture which said, 'Drive them out!' Allon and I held a consultation. I agreed that it was essential to drive the inhabitants out. We took them on foot towards the Bet Horon Road, assuming that the legion would be obliged to look after them, thereby shouldering logistic difficulties which would burden its fighting capacity, making things easier for us. 'Driving out' is a term with a harsh ring. Psychologically, this was one of the most difficult actions we undertook. The population of Lod did not leave willingly. There was no way of avoiding the use of force and warning shots in order to make the inhabitants march the 10 to 15 miles to the point where they met up with the legion. The inhabitants of Ramle watched and learned the lesson. Their leaders agreed to be evacuated voluntarily, on condition

often under tragic conditions. Not yet fifteen, I was overwhelmed by the sight of this huge mass of men, women, old people and children struggling under the weight of suitcases or bundles, making their way painfully down to the wharfs of Jaffa in a sinister tumult. Cries mingled with moaning and sobs, all punctuated by deafening explosions....At the time I didn't even ask myself why we were so hastily leaving our homes and belongings for the adventure of exile. It wouldn't have occurred to me at my age to question my father's authority, and besides, like everyone else, I was convinced that to stay would have meant sure death. News of the Deir Yassin massacre, which had taken place on April 9, 1948, still rang in our ears. Militants of Menachem Begin's group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, had stormed the peaceful village west of Jerusalem and wiped out most of its inhabitants: More than 250 defenseless men, women, and children had been shot down, buried alive, or had their throats slashed. Numerous bodies had been mutilated with knives, pregnant women had been disemboweled. We had no reason to doubt the news of this savage killing, confirmed by Jacques de Reynier, the representative of the International Red Cross, who personally conducted the investigation at the scene. Like Deir Yassin, Jaffa was at the mercy of the Zionist forces which completely controlled the hinterland of the city. The Haganah, the 'official' army of the Jewish Agency which closely coordinated its activities with those of the so-called dissident groups like Begin's Irgun, had unleashed a full-scale offensive at the beginning of April aimed at cleaning out the Arab 'pockets' within the territory set aside for the Jewish state. Before each attack, the population was warned that it would suffer the same fate as Deir Yassin's if it didn't evacuate the area. The news of the genocide had spread like wildfire throughout the entire country, helped along by the Zionist mass media which amplified it as part of its campaign to terrorize the Arabs. But there's no denying that the massacre was also used by Palestinian agitators trying to mobilize the population. For example, they stressed that Deir Yassin women had been raped by the Zionist forces and called upon their compatriots to defend their most precious possession, the honor of the wives and daughters. But in most cases the strategy backfired; In a profoundly traditional society such as ours, many men rushed to remove their women from the reach of the Zionist soldiers instead of staying to resist the aggression. I often remember hearing in this connection that 'honor is more important than land.' The decision of most of Jaffa's approximately 100,000 residents to flee the city for temporary refuge seemed all the more logical in that the Jews had an overwhelming military superiority. Better armed and better organized than the Palestinians, there was no question that they had the upper hand. The population began to take fright when Great Britain announced at the end of 1947 that it was relinquishing its mandate over Palestine and withdrawing its troops before May 15, 1948. So we couldn't even count on the protection--such as it was--of the British troops. Fright changed to panic when, after the Deir Yassin massacre, the Zionist forces began to pound the city, especially the port and business district. Everyone thought that the economic suffocation would serve as a prelude to the conquest of the city and doubtless new and atrocious killings" (pp. 3-5).

### Some other Issues

**Menachem Begin, on the Jewish Claim to Jordan:** "'Eretz Israel,' literally the 'Land of Israel,' has been regarded since Biblical times as the motherland of the Children of Israel. It has always comprised what came subsequently to be called Palestine on both sides of the river Jordan, that is to say not only Western Palestine, but also the territory formerly occupied by three of the twelve Hebrew tribes, Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben" (p. 3).

**Begin Defines Terrorism:** "Our enemies called us terrorists...And yet, we were not terrorists...The historical and linguistic origins of the political term 'terror' prove that it cannot be applied to a revolutionary war of liberation...A revolution, or a revolutionary war, does not aim at instilling fear. Its

units and ill-organized Palestinian units. Wealthy Palestinians often evacuated their families, especially from the port cities and coastal plain. This had the unintended consequence of depriving the Palestinians of many key leaders. Wave II started in April after the massacre at Deir Yassin. This produced mass flight. Wave III occurred after May when the Jews declared Israel a state and the Arab armies attacked. Israel set out to conquer areas designated for the Palestinian state, including Galilee and the Negev. Jewish claims to the contrary, Morris found no evidence that Arab leaders broadcast messages urging Arab civilians to flee. (This confirmed earlier research by Erskine Childers who had read British intelligence records monitoring radio broadcasts. Morris also had access to internal Israeli intelligence records). Morris did find one communication that instructed Jordanian commanders to assist with the evacuation of women and children in combat zones, but this applied only to combat situations and there was no suggestion that the civilians be removed from Palestine. Morris did find several Arab broadcasts urging Palestinians to stay put, often pointing out that their movement was disrupting military operations. Morris found that local Jewish leaders in Haifa and Tiberias tried to persuade fleeing Palestinians that they would be safe if they stayed.

**Morris on Plan Dalet:** It was “not a political blueprint for the expulsion of Palestine’s Arabs; it was governed by military considerations and was geared to achieving military ends. But given the nature of the war and admixture of the two populations, securing the interior of the Jewish state for the impending battle along its borders in practice meant the depopulations and destruction of villages that hosted hostile local militia and irregular forces.” Plan Dalat was “a blueprint for securing the emergent Jewish state and the clusters of Jewish settlements outside the state’s territory against the expected Arab invasion on or after 15 May. The plan was born out of a feeling of losing the diplomatic battle due to the shift in America’s policy and the initial success of the Arab irregulars.”

**Morris:** “However, during April-June relatively few Hagana commanders faced the dilemma of whether or not to carry out the expulsion clauses of Plan D. The Arab townspeople and villagers usually fled from their homes before or during the battle: the Hagana commanders had rarely to decide about, or issue, expulsion orders.”

**Morris:** “Plan D aside, there is no trace of any decision-making by the Yishuv’s or Hagana’s supreme bodies in March or earlier April in favour of a blanket, national policy of driving out the Arabs.”

#### **The Research of Tom Segev**

**Segev** focused his research on Ben-Gurion’s diaries, minutes of cabinet meeting, and internal communications. Some of his most valuable contributions are quotes from key personalities.

**Ben-Gurion:** On May 29, 1949 BG commented on a "harsh and threatening" letter from President Truman expressing outrage at how Palestinians had been treated. Truman said he had supported Jewish refugees out of compassion and now might support Palestinians for the same reason. B-G: "The State of Israel was not established as a consequence of the UN Resolution. Neither America nor any other country saw the Resolution through, nor did they stop the Arab countries (and the British mandatory government) from declaring total war on us in violation of UN Resolutions. America did not raise a finger to save us, and moreover, imposed an arms embargo, and had we been destroyed they would not have resurrected us. Those boundaries determined in the UN Resolution were based on peace accords, the validity of international law, and the Arabs' acceptance of them. But the Arabs rejected it. There are no refugees--there are fighters who sought to destroy us, root and branch. The Arab states came at their request and they still refuse to make peace or to recognize us, and are openly threatening revenge. Shall we bring back the refugees so that they can exterminate us for the second time, or should we ask America to take pity on us and send an army to protect us? America is immense. We are a tiny and helpless

Property Law. A Present Absentee was any Palestinian who stayed in Israel but was away from their "usual place of residence" on November 29, 1947. They lost their property whatever the reason for their absence. (Fleeing from fighting was a common reason). Over 500,000 acres were taken after 1948. When the Minister of Finance brought the Present Absentee law to the Knesset he warned members not to talk carelessly. "We are a small country but the interest of the world in all that happens and is said here is immense. It's as if the eyes of the world are constantly on us, watching, exploring, analyzing every step, every act, every word." To make the policy look better, the cabinet report pointed out other confiscations in India and Pakistan; Turkish Greeks and Armenians; Bulgarian Greeks; Iraqi Assyrians; Germans in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. In August, 1948 the government introduced a plan to create 32 Galilee settlements on 30,000 acres. 14,500 acres belonged to Arabs, 5,000 to government, 5,000 to other owners (Germans and Waqf), 5,000 to Jews. On the confiscation of some Waqf lands (held in trust for God), a Palestinian poet wrote, "God is an absentee" (Segev, pp. 69-86).

### **The Research of Ilan Pappé**

**Pappé** conducted a thorough study of political, diplomatic, and military factors from 1947-51. He wrote in 1998 and benefited from the research of Morris and Segev. He says a major consideration of the Jewish side was that the US was vacillating on whether to support the creation of a Jewish state. Regarding the distinction between hostile and non-hostile Arab villages, Pappé says this was a loose distinction since more than half of all Arab villages were considered hostile. Neutrality was not enough. Only those villages that surrendered unconditionally and agreed to support Israeli military efforts were considered friendly. Abu Ghosh was one. Nearly all villages and towns near Jerusalem were considered hostile and were destroyed. By August, 1948 286 villages had been destroyed and many others were seriously damaged and later abandoned or leveled. By 1949, 350 were destroyed.

**Pappé on Plan D:** "Jewish forces were instructed to occupy not only the area allocated to the Jews, but also the mixed towns of Palestine and many areas outside the designated Jewish state. The clear purpose was to win firm control over most of western Palestine and by that to precipitate the Arab invasion, thereby putting an end to the fluctuations of the American policy-makers... Its significance lies in the means by which the Jews hoped to solve the predicament of March 1948, as detailed in the plan itself. They include, as Khalidi notes, the uprooting, expulsion and pauperization of the Palestinian community; all signifying an escalation in Jewish actions against the Palestinian community. Until then the efforts were toward establishing a state, building an infrastructure, contemplating a takeover of the mandatory system--but Plan D spoke of the destruction of the other party to the conflict."

**Pappé:** "The 'defensive system' was a euphemism for what was the establishment of a security zone to be controlled entirely by Jewish forces. This zone covered all the regions surrounding Jewish settlements and quarters as well as the areas along important strategic routes. Plan D went on to outline a plan of action. This referred to 'enemy bases' and dealt with the need to attack them as a preventive measure. The term 'enemy bases' refers to Arab villages or quarters from which hostile actions had been launched against Jewish settlements and convoys. They were not proper military bases yet, they were civil locations accommodating army personnel and ammunition. Hence when Plan D called for their destruction, it was calling for the destruction of certain Arab population centres. The 'enemy bases' designated for attack as military objectives fell with three distinct categories: those located in the security zone defined above (i.e., the surroundings of Jewish settlements and all strategic routes); on the borders of the territory designated by the UN to become Arab Palestine; and those within the Jewish state as defined in the UN resolution...In the areas defined by the Jews as theirs only those villages which would surrender unconditionally would stand a chance of not being submitted to the harsh treatment mentioned above....Plan D did not, therefore only provide guidelines for the future, it also reflected an existing notion prevalent among the policy-makers of the Jewish community--the notion that a Jewish success in

code words and euphemisms of Plan D were clear: destroy the ability of the Palestinian population to survive within its land so that it would be forced to flee. He says the very idea of a Jewish state was inconsistent with the continued presence of the Palestinian population: "Plan Dalet, or 'Plan D,' was the name given by the Zionist High Command to the general plan for military operations within the framework of which the Zionists launched successive offensives in April and early May 1948 in various parts of Palestine. These offensives, which entailed the destruction of the bulk of the Palestine Arabs, were calculated to achieve the military *fait accompli* upon which the state of Israel was to be based."

**Ben-Gurion on a Different Topic:** "The Moslem rule in Lebanon is artificial and easily undermined. A Christian state ought to be set up whose southern border would be the Litani River. Then we'll form an alliance with it." Sharett described Ben-Gurion's position: "all we need to do is to find a Christian Lebanese officer, perhaps no higher than a captain, and win him over or buy him with money, so that he would declare himself the savior of the Maronite [Catholic] population. Then the Israeli army would enter Lebanon, occupy the territory in question and establish a Christian government which would form an alliance with Israel." (1948, quoted in Segev, p. 10).

#### BENNY MORRIS, 2004

In 2004 Morris updated his book based upon newly released archival materials. Strengthening his early research, Morris found that "the transfer idea was in the air" and that Ben Gurion was "projecting a message of transfer." What stunned Israeli intellectuals was that Morris, a one-time leftist, anti-war activist who had been imprisoned for refusal to serve in the military in Lebanon, concluded that Ben Gurion had gone soft and had been reluctant to do what he should have done—complete the expulsions. Morris says that expulsion may be the only solution and may be in the future. Interview of January, 2004, *Ha'aretz*. There is another interview in *The Atlantic*, May 2004.

**Regarding rape, murder and expulsions in 1948:** "[W]hat the new material shows is that there were far more Israeli acts of massacre than I had previously thought. To my surprise, there were also many cases of rape. In the months of April-May 1948, units of the Haganah were given operational orders that stated explicitly that they were to uproot the villagers, expel them and destroy the villages themselves." Morris found evidence of a dozen cases of rape. "In a large proportion of the cases the event ended with murder. Because neither the victims nor the rapists liked to report these events, we have to assume that the dozen cases of rape that were reported, which I found, are not the whole story. They are just the tip of the iceberg." He also found evidence of 24 massacres and "a great deal of arbitrary killing...Apparently, various officers who took part in the operation understood that the expulsion order they received permitted them to do these deeds in order to encourage the population to take to the roads. The fact is that no one was punished for these acts of murder. Ben-Gurion silenced the matter. He covered up for the officers who did the massacres."

**Expulsions in 1948:** "From April 1948, Ben-Gurion is projecting a message of transfer. There is no explicit order of his in writing, there is no orderly comprehensive policy, but there is an atmosphere of transfer. The transfer idea is in the air. The entire leadership understands that this is the idea. The officer corps understands what is required of them. Under Ben-Gurion, a consensus of transfer is created...Ben-Gurion was a transferist. He understood that there could be no Jewish state with a large and hostile Arab minority in its midst. There would be no such state. It would not be able to exist. Ben-Gurion was right. If he had not done what he did, a state would not have come into being. That has to be clear. It is impossible to evade it. Without the uprooting of the Palestinians, a Jewish state would not have arisen here." Regarding the expulsion of 50,000 people from Lod [Lydda and Ramle] in Operation Dani: "I definitely understand them. I understand their motives. I don't think they felt any pangs of conscience and in their place I wouldn't have felt pangs of conscience. Without that act, they would not

## Useful Resources

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## WHO'S WHO

**Abu Iyad** (Salah Khalaf) was number two in the PLO until assassinated in 1990 by Saddam Hussein for renouncing the invasion of Kuwait.

**Yigael Allon** was the leader of the Palmach elite military unit and was a key commander in 1948. He was considered the next Prime Minister until his early death in 1981. He wrote *The Book of Palmach*.

**Menachem Begin** was head of the Irgun, a Jewish militant force, later changed into a party called Herut, the core of the Likud party. He was renounced as a "terrorist" by other Jews and accused of responsibility for the massacre at Deir Yassin. His book, *The Revolt*, written in 1949 when Begin was still in opposition, is a fascinating work.

**David Ben-Gurion** was leader of Palestinian Jews, first Prime Minister, & Founding Father of Israel.

**Samuel Katz** was an Irgun leader who became advisor to Prime Minister Begin on "Overseas Information" in 1977. His views represent those of the Revisionist right. He joined the Land of Israeli Movement to settle the West Bank.

**Walid Khalidi** is a professor at Oxford University. He is a Palestinian refugee from Jerusalem. He edited an excellent collection of documents and accounts called *From Haven to Conquest*.



## The Death of Hope: Settling the E1 Bloc November 29, 2012

On November 29, the UN declared Palestine to be a non-member state. The vote was 138-9-41. The US and Israel were adamantly opposed but most of the world agreed. Within hours, Israel announced that they were issuing permits for 3,000 new houses in the Palestinian West Bank. This announcement seemed to send three messages: First, this is what we think of the Palestinian Authority. Second, we can do whatever we want. The UN and world public opinion can go to hell and the Americans can spit and fume, but we know they will not

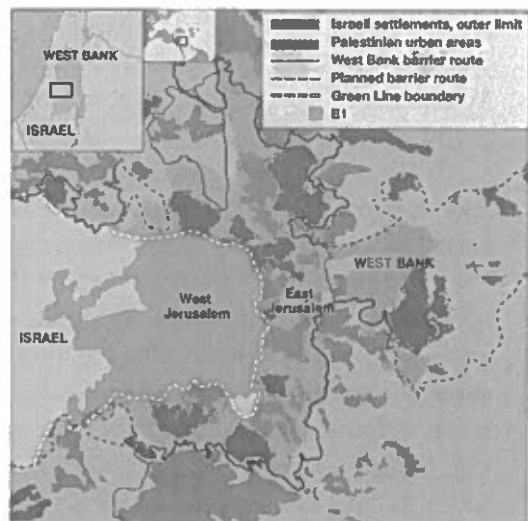
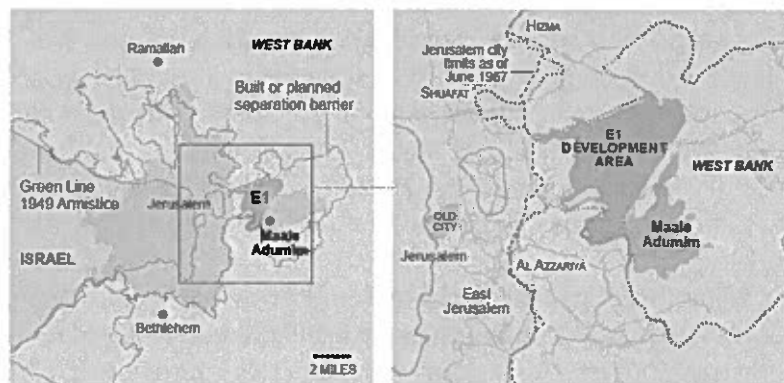
act to stop us. Third, there will be no negotiation process that involves closing down any of our settlements inside of the so-called Palestinian state. If we agree to give the Palestinians a state it will be in the 40-60% of the

so-called West Bank that we want to give to them. We intend to keep whatever we want for ourselves, including most of the Jordan Valley. Moreover, by the "West Bank" we do not include anything that we consider to be Jerusalem. That whole area is off the table. Moreover, any settlement will not include land exchanges.

After reading the details, I realized that there was another message, one far more serious, even ominous. It involves a decision to move forward with the development of the E1 salient east of East Jerusalem. Let me explain why that 4.5 square mile bloc is so significant.

When most people think of Jerusalem they think of the ancient walled city, about a mile and a half across, surrounded by an ancient wall. But before 1967, when Israel captured the West Bank and the whole of Jerusalem, there were actually two other "Jerusalems." One was West Jerusalem or Jewish Jerusalem, a part of Israel. It was built mostly in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and included Jewish neighborhoods, the Knesset (parliament), Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Memorial), and various government buildings. It once included a large middle class of Muslim and Christian Palestinian but they fled or were driven out during the fighting in 1948.

Today, religious Jews cluster in West Jerusalem. The other Jerusalem was East Jerusalem, which was much older. It was Arab Jerusalem. In spite of being called "East" Jerusalem, it stretched around the north, east and south of the old walled city.



within the greater metropolitan zone.

The last bloc of land that had not been incorporated into that circle and built up with Jewish settlers was the E-1 salient. (Look at the map). Like a life line, it linked Arab East Jerusalem with the rest of the West Bank and with Ramallah to the north and Bethlehem to the south. Those who wanted a negotiated settlement had fought to keep that area un-annexed. Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama had all insisted that Israel not develop it. When I was there in 2007 I saw that area bulldozed flat and laid out for future construction. The land had been cleared of trees and there was a police station in the middle of the salient. (The Israelis always put a police station into a new settlement area as the first building). The Americans and world opinion had prevented even Netanyahu from touching that last hope for a settlement. Now, in retaliation for the UN vote, the Israelis have announced that they are moving forward with the development of E1.

To the settlers and to many in Netanyahu's ultra right wing government, this is the fulfillment of a dream. Finally the Jewish people will be able to consolidate their control of the West Bank and leave the Palestinians with a dependent mini-state dominated by Israel. (Even the Israeli public is now comparing this to the old apartheid system in white-ruled South Africa when the government set up phony "Bantustans" as independent countries). But to others (including many Israelis in the security forces and not on the hard right), this is a very dangerous development. If this new E1 settlement goes through it will be a knife in the heart of any possible negotiated outcome. To borrow from Churchill, it will strangle that baby in its cradle.

The settlement of the E1 bloc will complete the seal that surrounds Arab Jerusalem with a tight ring of Jewish settlements. It will cut off any possible connection between the northern and southern sections of the West Bank, creating a fragmented set of Palestinian "cantons" disconnected from each other except by roads that twist through Jewish territory. The hope for a viable Palestinian state will be dead, leaving behind what is often called a divided "swiss cheese" set of entities. This will produce permanent stalemate, destabilization, and violent resistance as the only alternative. It will lead to the ultimate destruction of this amazing land. Not to engage in hyperbole but history will be changed, not for the better.

### **Update:**

In November 7, 2017 President Trump recognized "Jerusalem" as the capital of the state of Israel. He announced that he would be moving the American Embassy to that city. This would make us the only country in the world with an Embassy in Jerusalem. Every other country, including all previous U. S. presidents, have said that any such decision should wait for a negotiated agreement. He also specified that we would recognize the Old City, including the Haram al Sharif and the Muslim Quarter, in Israeli Jerusalem. Then he closed the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem. This was very significant. This Consulate reported to the Secretary of State rather than to the U.S. Embassy. It was a way of affirming that East Jerusalem was not a part of Israel. By having it report to the U.S. Ambassador to Israel, it changed the definition of East Jerusalem.

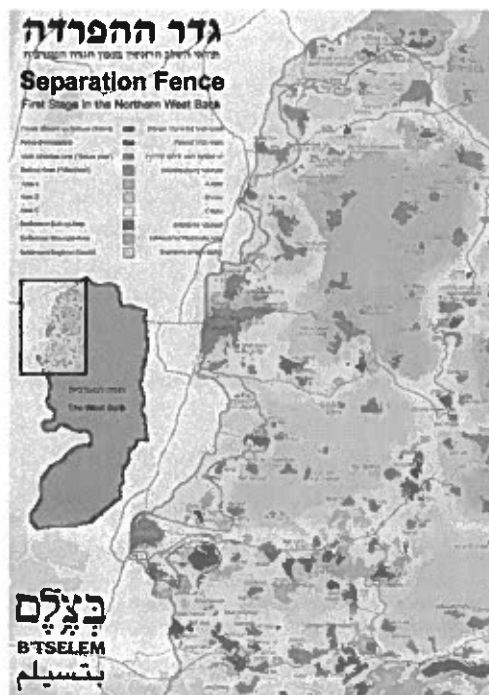
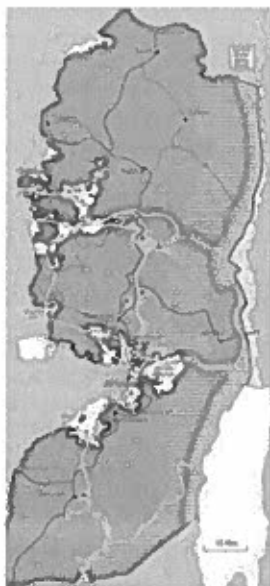
## The Israeli Wall

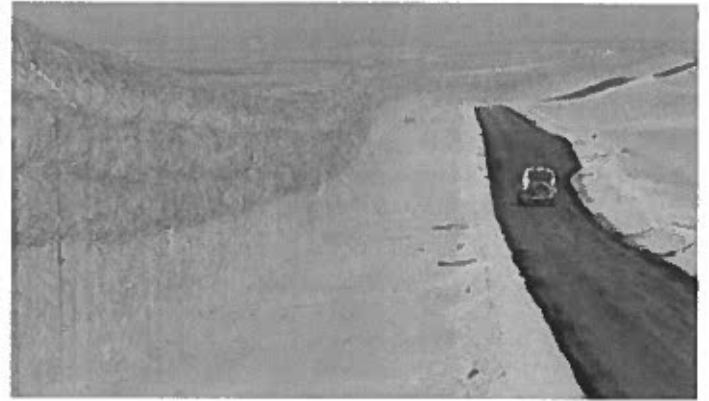
Around 2000, Ehud Barack said that if the negotiation process did not work, he would make unilateral decisions regarding the future of the West Bank. He designed a “wall” to surround Palestine so that nobody could cross into Israel proper. Today, Israeli advocates insist that it be called a “security fence” rather than a “wall.” Indeed, there are places where it is a fence, but it is mostly a large, ominous cement wall. The “fence” is also razor wire. Not exactly what we in the Midwest think of when we use the word “fence.” The wall runs through the middle of Bethlehem and surrounds Jerusalem. It is very ominous.

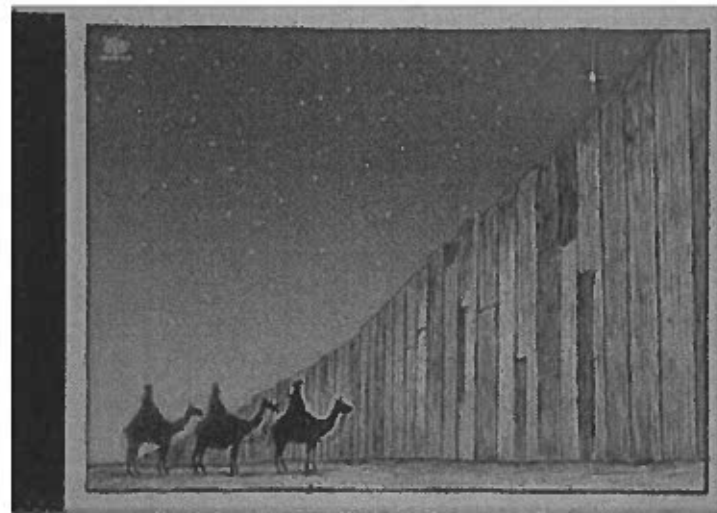
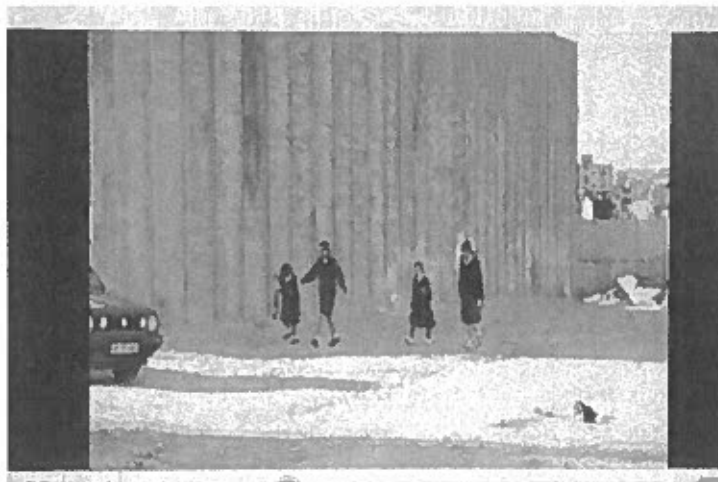
The wall was originally intended to run along the Israeli border but as it was actually constructed it penetrated into the Palestinian West Bank itself. I have often said that if he had run along the Israeli border it would have been the most dramatic breakthrough for peace since the armistice of January, 1948. Israel is the only state in the world that has never defined its border. (The Treaties with Egypt and Jordan define their borders, but that leaves ambiguous the status of the West Bank). A wall on the 1949 Armistice Line (the Green Line) would have defined the boundary between Israel and Palestine and would have made a negotiated settlement not only possible but likely. Unfortunately, it did not go that way.

The wall penetrations were very selective, cutting Bethlehem in half, separating Jenin from some of its farmland, capturing an aquifer, acquiring additional rich farmland for Israel. Israeli advocates often say that the number of Israelis killed by suicide bombing since the wall went up has dropped dramatically. Indeed, that is true, but it is also true that the Palestinians declared an end to the Al Aqsa Intifada in 2005, so that was also a factor. Those of you who have seen *Paradise Now*, about two young men contemplating suicide bombings, know that there are places where Palestinians pass through the wall as if it were not there.

The Wall has also become a symbol of something very bad. Cartoonists use it to demonstrate the impact of the occupation and graffiti artists see it as a canvas for public displays of protest. Even the Pope took a position.







F=TheWallMapsImagesCartoons (385/Settlements)